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CHARLES STEWART PARNELL

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Charles Stewart Parnell

THE LIFE

OF

CHARLES STEWART PARNELL

1846–1891

BY

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Portrait of Charles Stewart Parnell . *Frontispiece*

THE LIFE

OF

CHARLES STEWART PARNELL

CHAPTER I

PARNELL'S ANCESTORS

THE founder of the Parnell family was Thomas Parnell 'mercer or draper,' who became Mayor of Congleton, Cheshire, in the reign of James I. He had four sons—William, Thomas, Richard, and Tobias. Of William and Thomas little is known, but Richard seems to have been the most remarkable of the brothers. He was a staunch Cromwellian, the friend of Bradshaw, and thrice mayor of the town. Tobias was a gilder and decorative painter, and also stood high in the esteem of his fellow-citizens. He passed away with the Commonwealth. At the Restoration, his son Thomas, quitting the old home, purchased an estate in Ireland, and took up his abode there. This Thomas Parnell—the first of the Irish Parnells—was the ancestor of an illustrious offspring. Dying probably in 1685, he left two sons—Thomas, the poet, the friend of Swift, Pope, Gay Bolingbroke, and other famous wits; and John, who

died one of the judges of the Irish Court of King's Bench.[1]

Thomas, the poet, was born in Dublin in 1679. A bright lad with a remarkable memory, he attracted the special attention of Dr. Jones, to whose school he was first sent, and afterwards sustained his early reputation by a distinguished career at college. Matriculating at Dublin University in 1693, he took his degree in 1697. Then, entering the Church, he was ordained Deacon in 1700, and Priest in 1703. In 1704 he became Minor Canon of St. Patrick's, and in 1706 Archdeacon of Clogher. Soon afterwards he married Miss Anne Minchin, of Tipperary—a beautiful girl, to whom he was passionately attached. His life was soon divided between literary pursuits and Church affairs. In 1709 Convocation appointed a committee to consider the best means for converting the Irish Catholics, and Parnell was made its chairman. But his heart was in literature. He now paid frequent visits to London, and mingled in the society of the wits of the day. He was very popular, prized for his conversational gifts and scholarly attainments. With Pope he was a special favourite, while Swift held him in high esteem. The former was always impatient of his absence in Ireland, and would often write to urge his return to his English friends.

'Dear sir,' says Pope in one of these letters, 'not only as you are a friend, and a good natured man, but as you are a Christian and a divine, come back speedily and prevent the increase of my sins; for at the rate I have began to rave, I shall not only damn all the poets and commentators who have gone before me, but be

[1] Head, *Congleton, Past and Present.*

damned myself by all who come after me. To be serious, you have not only left me to the last degree impatient for your return, who at all times should have been so (though never so much as since I knew you in best health here), but you have wrought several miracles upon our family. You have made old people fond of a young and gay person, and inveterate papists of a clergyman of the Church of England. Even nurse herself is in danger of being in love in her old age; and, for aught I know, would even marry Dennis for your sake, because he is your man, and loves his master. In short come down forthwith, or give me good reasons for delaying, though but for a day or two, by the next post. If I find them just, I will come up to you, though you must know how precious my time is at present; my hours were never worth so much money before; but perhaps you are not sensible of this, who give away your own works. You are a generous author; I, a hackney scribbler. You are a Grecian and bred at a University; I a poor Englishman, of my own educating. You are a reverend parson, I a wag. In short, you are a Doctor Parnelle (with an *e* at the end of your name), and I your obliged and affectionate friend and faithful servant.'

In August 1711 Parnell lost his wife, and her death seems to have overwhelmed him with grief. Nearly a year later Swift wrote in his 'Journal to Stella': 'On Sunday Archdeacon Parnell came here to see me. It seems he has been ill for grief of his wife's death, and has been two months at Bath. He has a mind to go to Dunkirk with Jack Hill, and I persuaded him to it, and have spoke to Hill to receive him, but I doubt he won't have spirit to go.'

Towards the end of 1712 Parnell wrote a poetical

essay on the 'Different Styles of Poetry.' Swift made him insert 'some compliments' to Bolingbroke, and then seized the opportunity of introducing him to the Minister. On December 22 the Dean notes in his 'Journal to Stella': 'I gave Lord Bolingbroke a poem of Parnell's. I made Parnell insert some compliments in it to his lordship. He is extremely pleased with it, and read some parts of it to-day to Lord Treasurer, who liked it much; and, indeed, he outdoes all our poets here a bar's length. Lord Bolingbroke has ordered me to bring him to dinner on Christmas Day, and I made Lord Treasurer promise to see him, and it may one day do Parnell a kindness.'

'*Dec.* 25*th.*—I carried Parnell to dine at Lord Bolingbroke's, and he behaved himself very well, and Lord Bolingbroke is mightily pleased with him.'

'*January* 31*st.*—I contrived it so, that Lord Treasurer came to me and asked (I had Parnell by me) whether that was Dr. Parnell, and came up and spoke to him with great kindness, and invited him to his house. I value myself on making the ministry desire to be acquainted with Parnell, and not Parnell with the ministry. His poem is almost fully corrected, and shall be out soon.'

February 19*th.*—I was at Court to-day, to speak to Lord Bolingbroke to look over Parnell's poem since it is corrected, and Parnell and I dined with him, and he has shown him three or four more places to alter a little. Lady Bolingbroke came down to us while we were at dinner, and Parnell stared at her as if she were a goddess. I thought she was like Parnell's wife, and he thought so too.'

But despite Parnell's literary distractions, the death of his wife still seriously affected his health and spirits.

On March 6, 1713, Swift says in his 'Journal': 'I thought to have made Parnell dine with him (Lord Treasurer), but he was ill; his head is out of order like mine, but more constant, poor boy.' And again, on March 20: 'Parnell's poem will be published on Monday, and to-morrow I design he shall present it to Lord Treasurer and Lord Bolingbroke, at Court. The poor lad is almost always out of order with his head.' The poem was now published. '[It is],' says Swift, 'mightily esteemed; but poetry sells ill.'

In 1714 we find Parnell, who was still in precarious health, at Bath with Pope. In 1715 he was once more in Ireland. In 1716 he was presented to the Vicarage of Finglass, which he retained until his death two years later. Towards the close of his life he seems to have suffered more acutely from fits of depression, to which he was apparently subject for many years. At these times he kept himself away from his friends, withdrawing to a remote part of the country, and there enjoying a 'gloomy kind of satisfaction in giving hideous descriptions of the solitude' by which he was surrounded. In the summer of 1718 he paid his last visit to London, and met some of his old friends. But his health was now rapidly failing, and, on his way to Ireland in October, he fell suddenly ill at Chester and there died: pre-deceased by two unmarried sons, and leaving one daughter, who, it is said, lived to a ripe old age. His remains rest in Holy Trinity churchyard, not far from the home of his ancestors.[1]

In 1721 Pope raised the most enduring monument to his fame by bringing out an edition of his works,

[1] Goldsmith, *Life of Thomas Parnell*; Johnson, *Lives of the Poets* (ed. Cunningham); Swift's *Journal to Stella*; *The Dictionary of National Biography*.

and dedicating the volume in immortal lines to the Earl of Oxford:

> 'Such were the notes, thy once-loved poet sung,
> 'Till death untimely stopp'd his tuneful tongue.
> Oh, just beheld, and lost! admired and mourn'd,
> With softest manners, gentlest arts, adorn'd!
> Blest in each science, blest in every strain!
> Dear to the muse, to Harley dear in vain!
> For him thou oft hast bid the world attend,
> Fond to forget the statesman in the friend:
> For Swift and him, despis'd the farce of state,
> The sober follies of the wise and great;
> Dext'rous the craving fawning crowd to quit,
> And pleas'd to 'scape from flattery to wit.
> Absent or dead, still let a friend be dear
> (A sigh the absent claims, the dead a tear);
> Recall those nights that closed thy toilsome days,
> Still hear thy Parnell in his living lays:
> Who careless, now, of int'rest, fame, or fate,
> Perhaps forgets that Oxford ere was great,
> Or, deeming meanest what we greatest call,
> Behold thee glorious only in thy fall.'

The family property (including land in Armagh, which the poet inherited from his mother) now descended to the poet's brother John. Beyond the fact that he was a barrister, a member of Parliament, and a judge, little is known of the details of John Parnell's life. Married to the sister of Lord Chief Justice Whitshed, he died in 1727, leaving one son, John, who became member for Bangor in 1761, and was created a baronet in 1766. He married the second daughter of the Hon. Michael Ward, of Castleward, in the County Down, one of the judges of the Court of King's Bench, and, dying in 1782, was succeeded by his famous son, Sir John Parnell, Chancellor of the Exchequer in Grattan's Parliament.

Sir John Parnell was born about 1745. At first intended for the diplomatic service, he ultimately gave himself up wholly to Irish politics. Becoming a student of Lincoln's Inn in 1766, he was never called to the Bar either in England or Ireland; though elected, many years later, a bencher of the King's Inns, Dublin. He entered the Irish Parliament about 1776, and was appointed a Commissioner of Customs and Excise in 1780.

Parnell's position was now unique. Holding office under the Crown, he possessed the confidence of Grattan and the Nationalists; a supporter of the Government, he was in touch with popular feeling. He commanded a volunteer corps during the great crisis of 1780–82, and cordially identified himself with the struggle for legislative independence. In 1783, however, he opposed Flood's Scheme of Parliamentary Reform, and later still he declined, like many other patriotic Irishmen of the time, to follow Grattan's lead on the Catholic question. Standing high in favour with the authorities, he became Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1785, and Privy Councillor in 1786. In 1788 he won popular applause by reducing the interest on the National Debt from 6 to 5 per cent. After the admission of the Catholics to the parliamentary franchise in 1793, he was drawn more into sympathy with them, and apparently looked upon complete emancipation as inevitable.

In 1794 he, Grattan, and some other Irish politicians visited London and conferred with Pitt on Irish affairs. At a dinner party at the Duke of Portland's, Parnell, who sat next to Pitt, took the opportunity of introducing the subject of Catholics and Protestants in Ireland. He said that the old feeling of ill-will was

disappearing, and that he looked forward hopefully to the establishment of more cordial relations between the members of both creeds. 'Yes, Sir,' said Pitt, 'but the question is, whose will they be?' A union between Catholics and Protestants in the English interest would have been gratifying enough to the English Minister, but a union for the purpose of building up an Irish nation was not to his taste. It was, however, rather of the Irish nation than the English interest that both Grattan and Parnell were thinking, and Pitt no doubt shrewdly suspected the fact. 'What does Ireland want?' he said to Grattan. 'What would she have more?' 'Mr. Pitt does not like Ireland,' Grattan observed afterwards. 'She is not handy enough for him.' And handy enough, indeed, she was not for Mr. Pitt, nor has she been for any other English Minister. Before leaving England Grattan told Pitt that the time had come when the Catholics should be completely emancipated, and, as we know, in 1795 Lord Fitzwilliam was sent as Viceroy to emancipate them. Parnell, at Grattan's urgent request, was retained in office, a fact which shows how thoroughly the Nationalist leader believed in the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The sudden recall of Lord Fitzwilliam and the breach of faith with the Catholics are amongst the best known and the most discreditable transactions in the history of the English in Ireland. Rebellion followed, and when it was crushed Pitt determined to destroy the Irish Parliament.

In November 1798 Sir John Parnell was in London, and Pitt broached the subject of the Union to him. Parnell dealt cautiously with the subject, saying, 'that before any decided step was taken communications

ought to be opened with the leading men in Ireland and public opinion sounded.'

In December 1798 Lord Cornwallis wrote to the Duke of Portland : 'I trust that the Speaker [Sir John Foster] and Sir John Parnell will not have left London before Lord Castlereagh's arrival, as I consider it highly important that he should have an opportunity of hearing them state their opinions before the king's minister on the question. Some of the king's servants appeared to be amongst the most impracticable in their opinions ; and I feel confident that your Grace will leave no means untried to impress these gentlemen more favourably before they return to this kingdom.' But Sir John Parnell was not 'impressed favourably,' for we find Cornwallis writing to Portland on January 16, 1799 : 'On my finding from a conversation which I had with Sir John Parnell soon after he landed that he was determined not to support the Union, I have notified to him his dismission from the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer.' Parnell now flung himself heart and soul into the struggle against the Union. On January 22 he opposed the measure *in limine*, though in what Cornwallis described as a 'fair and candid' speech, avoiding 'topics of violence.' 'I have only now to express my sincere regret,' Cornwallis wrote to Portland on January 23, 'to your Grace that the prejudices prevailing amongst the members of the Commons, countenanced and encouraged as they have been by the Speaker and Sir John Parnell, are infinitely too strong to afford me any prospect of bringing forward this measure with any chance of success in the course of the present session.'

In 1800 the struggle was renewed, and Parnell fought against the Government with increasing vigour

and vehemence. On February 17, 1800, we learn from Cornwallis that 'Sir John Parnell rose at eleven and went into the details of the measure, on which he commented with severity.' On March 13 he moved that 'an address be presented to his Majesty, to request his Majesty to dissolve the present Parliament and call a new one before the measure of legislative Union should be concluded.'

After a fierce debate the motion was defeated at three o'clock in the morning by a majority of 150 to 104.

On May 26 we find Parnell defending Grattan from the imputation of treason cast upon him by Lord Castlereagh. Grattan had said that the Union was a measure of slavery, but that liberty was immortal, and that the nation would yet rise to recover its rights. 'Rebellion, treason,' cried Castlereagh. 'No,' retorted Parnell, 'for we shall recover our rights by constitutional means. The Sovereign himself will yet appeal to the people to vindicate the freedom of which they have been robbed.' But there was no such appeal. The people were not consulted. The Parliament was destroyed by force and fraud. The nation was cheated by intrigue and falsehood. Immediately after the Union Parnell took his seat in the English House of Commons as member for the Queen's County. But he did not long survive the Irish Parliament, dying somewhat suddenly in Clifford Street, London, on December 5, 1801. There were few members of the old Irish Parliament more universally esteemed than Sir John Parnell. Frank, upright, honourable, courageous, he won the confidence of friends and the admiration of foes. Moderate in opinion, firm in resolve, he entered every struggle with deliberation and fought every issue without flinching.

Called to high office in corrupt days, he never used his position for the advancement of a single member of his family; he never under any circumstances allowed personal considerations to interfere with his lofty conceptions of public duty. He was no orator; but his speeches commanded the attention and respect always given to a man who speaks with the authority which knowledge, sense, and honesty confer. A short time after his death the Prime Minister, Mr. Addington, paid a just tribute of esteem to his memory, describing him as a man 'whose loss they deeply deplored and whose memory would be reverenced by all who set any value on a sound understanding, extensive information, and a benevolent heart.'

Sir John married Letitia Charlotte, second daughter and co-heiress of Sir Arthur Brooke, Bart., of Colebrooke, County Fermanagh, and had six children, amongst whom were Henry, the first Lord Congleton, and William, the grandfather of Charles Stewart Parnell.

Henry Parnell had a distinguished career. Born in 1776, he was educated at Eton, and Trinity College, Cambridge. In 1797 he entered the Irish Parliament, and took his place in the National ranks, in the struggle against the Union. On his father's death in 1801 he succeeded to the family estates which had been settled on him by Act of Parliament in 1789, owing to the incurable mental and physical disabilities of his eldest brother, John Augustus. Entering the English Parliament in April 1802, he retired before the end of the year; only, however, to return to active life early in 1806 as member for the Queen's County. Appointed a Commissioner of the Treasury in Ireland under the short-lived Grenville Administration (1806–7), he found

himself again in Opposition after enjoying the sweets of office for less than a twelvemonth. In Opposition as in power he was a staunch supporter of the Catholic claims, and threw himself into the struggle for emancipation with persistence and energy.

In 1809 he called the attention of Parliament to the Tithe Question, and moved for an inquiry; but the motion was rejected by a large majority. In 1810 he returned to the subject, but again failed to awaken the interest of the House of Commons in it. During the hard fight for the removal of the Catholic disabilities, he stood side by side with Grattan until 1815, when the two friends for a time parted. Grattan had expressed his willingness to accept emancipation, subject to the condition that the Crown should have a veto on the appointment of the Catholic bishops. But O'Connell, who was now rapidly rising to power, demanded emancipation unfettered by any such restrictions, and carried the country with him. In this crisis Parnell supported O'Connell, and thenceforth became the representative of the Catholic Board in the House of Commons.

In July 1815 Sir Henry moved for a commission to inquire into the nature and effects of the Orange Society in Ireland. 'I voted for the question,' says Sir Samuel Romilly in his diary, 'and, as is always the case in important questions of this kind relative to Ireland, in a very small minority. We were only 20, the majority being upwards of 80.' We get some more glimpses of Parnell in Sir Samuel Romilly's diary:

'*May* 21, 1817.—Mr. Peel moved and obtained leave to bring in a Bill to continue the Irish Insurrection Act. I intended to oppose it, but, knowing that

Sir Henry Parnell meant to oppose it too, I waited for him to rise, as he meant to do. But the question having been put hastily, it was declared by the Speaker to be carried before he had risen; and it was therefore passed without opposition.

'*May* 23.—I opposed on the second reading the further progress of the Bill for continuing the Irish Insurrection Act, on the ground that a measure of such extraordinary severity ought not to be continued, but in case of absolute necessity; and that that necessity could not be apparent without an inquiry into the state of Ireland. That it was quite unjustifiable to persevere in such a system, upon no better grounds than the mere statements of the Irish Secretary. None of the members for Ireland supported me in this opposition except Sir Henry Parnell and General Matthew.

'*June* 13.—On a motion for going into committee on the Irish Insurrection Bill I again resisted the further progress of it, and supported a motion of Sir Henry Parnell for an inquiry into the facts which were stated as the grounds of proposing the measure. General Matthew and Sir William Burroughs were the only other members who opposed the Bill now, as they were the only members who had, together with myself and Sir Henry Parnell, opposed the second reading.'

In 1825 Parnell opposed the Bill for the suppression of the Catholic Association, urging that Ministers should adopt not a policy of coercion, but of redress.

After the concession of Catholic Emancipation in 1829, Parnell co-operated with the Liberal party; and, indeed, it was on his motion to refer the Civil List to a Select Committee that the Government of the Duke of

Wellington was defeated and driven from office in November 1830. On the accession of the Grey Ministry, Parnell was made Secretary of War and Privy Councillor. But he proved a restive subaltern. He differed from the Postmaster-General on the subject of postal reform, he prepared army estimates which the Ministry would not accept, and, finally, he was dismissed from office in January 1832 for refusing to vote in favour of paying the dividend on the Russian-Dutch Loan, contrary to treaty stipulations.[1] On leaving office he wrote to Brougham, urging him to induce the Government of Lord Grey to come to terms with O'Connell and to take up the Irish question. 'Recurring to Ireland,' he said, 'I must press on you the urgency of your taking an active and decided part in its affairs. You are the only member of the Cabinet who at all comprehends the case. Most of your colleagues are not only ignorant of it, but, as it seems to me, incapable of understanding it.'

Parnell did not contest Maryborough at the general election of 1832, but in 1833 he was returned for Dundee.

In 1835 he became Paymaster-General of the Forces in the Melbourne Administration, a post which he held until his elevation to the peerage as Lord Congleton in 1841. He now ceased to take interest in public affairs. His health became seriously impaired. His mind was ultimately affected, and, in August 1842, he died by his own hand at his residence in Cadogan Place, Chelsea.

Sir Henry Parnell was an advanced Liberal of inde-

[1] During the French war Russia had borrowed from a Dutch house in Amsterdam the sum of 25,000,000 florins. After the war, the King of the Netherlands and Great Britain agreed to bear one-half of the charge until Holland and Belgium were separated—a contingency which happened in 1830.

pendent views and a sturdy spirit. At first interesting himself chiefly in Irish and financial questions, he soon pushed forward along the whole line of Liberal reform. He advocated the extension of the franchise and vote by ballot, the shortening of Parliaments, the repeal of the corn laws, and a rigorous policy of retrenchment in all public departments. Nearly half a century later his grand-nephew took a leading part in the agitation for the abolition of flogging in the army. But Sir Henry anticipated the movement, and, in office and out of office, condemned the lash with uncompromising hostility. Like his father, he was no orator, but a plain, businesslike, matter-of-fact speaker, who, however, possessed a complete mastery of every subject on which he touched, and was always listened to with attention and respect. His appearance in the House of Commons is thus described by a contemporary authority: 'Sir Henry Parnell is a respectable, but by no means a superior, speaker. He has a fine clear voice, but he never varies the key in which he commences. He is, however, audible in all parts of the House. His utterance is well timed, and he appears to speak with great ease. He delivers his speeches in much the same way as if he were repeating some pieces of writing he had committed to his memory in his schoolboy years. His gesticulation is a great deal too tame for his speeches to produce any effect. He stands stock still, except when he occasionally raises and lets fall his right hand. Even this he does in a very gentle manner. What he excels in is giving a plain, luminous statement of complex financial matters. In this respect he has no superior. Sir Henry is gentlemanly in his appearance; so is he also in reality. His manners are highly courteous. His stature is of the middle size, rather inclining to

stoutness. His complexion is fair, his features are regular, with a mild expression about them; and his hair is pure white.'[1] Sir Henry published several books, the most important of which is a 'History of the Penal Laws against Irish Catholics from 1689 to the Union'—the best work, perhaps, on the subject.

He married Lady Caroline Elizabeth Dawson, eldest daughter of the first Earl of Portarlington, by whom he had five children, three daughters and two sons.

Sir Henry's youngest brother, William—the grandfather, as has been said, of Charles Stewart Parnell—was born about 1780. Of his early years little is known. But in 1801 he succeeded, under his father's will, to the property of Avondale, which had been settled on Sir John Parnell by a friend and admirer, Samuel Hayes, barrister-at-law. William Parnell was a modest, retiring man, fond of his books and his home; and, though keenly interested in political affairs, unwilling to take active part in public life. An enemy of the Union, a friend to the Catholics, a good landlord, a just magistrate, amiable, benevolent, sympathetic, he was very popular amongst the people in whose midst he lived, and whose welfare he studied. From his quiet retreat near the beautiful Vale of Avoca he watched the political struggle beyond, and even sometimes gave signs of the faith that was in him. In 1805 he published a pamphlet, entitled, 'An Enquiry into the Causes of Popular Discontent,' setting out the causes thus:

'1st. The recollections which exist in Ireland of being a conquered people.

'2nd. The great confiscation of private property.

[1] *Random Recollections of the House of Commons.*

'3rd. The distinctions between Protestants and Catholics.

'4th. The distinction between the members of the Church of England and the Presbyterians.

'5th. Tithes.

'6th. The degraded state of the peasantry.

'7th. The influence of a Republican Party.

'8th. The Union.'

He devotes many pages to a vigorous condemnation of the Union, putting the case at one point very happily, thus: 'The reasoning and practice of the Union was very like a transaction in "Mon Oncle Thomas." A grenadier sold his son's teeth to a dentist. The only difficulty was to persuade the child to part with them. The contracting parties took the favourable opportunity of a severe fit of toothache and reasoned the matter thus: "This tooth you are going to have drawn gives you a great deal of pain; all the rest will decay in their turn, and give you as much pain; therefore, while you are about it, you had better have them all drawn at once." "Oh, but," said the child, "how should I be able to chew my victuals?" "That is easily settled," said the father; "I will chew them for you." The English,' said Parnell, 'have the disposition of a nation accustomed to Empire. Anything that compromises their own dignity is out of the question. But the dignity of any other nation never makes any obstacle to their measures.' A few years later he published the work by which he is best known, 'An Historical Apology for the Irish Catholics.' This is a remarkable little book, showing an intimate knowledge of Irish history, and displaying both literary skill and logical acumen. Taking up the argument that Irish disaffection springs from religious causes, he proves

that the Irish were rebellious before religious differences arose. The English came, he says in effect, to rob and kill, and the Irish fought for property and life. 'Contemporary writers never mentioned religion as a cause of rebellion till long after the Reformation; on the contrary, their fears are always expressed against the Irishry, not against the Papists. They found the greatest opposition in national pride, not in religion.' He thus deals with the Protestant oligarchy, though he himself belonged to that oligarchy: 'The Protestants, in their terror of persecution, have become persecutors, their alarm at Catholic atrocities has made them atrocious. To hear them speak, one would imagine that they had been the patient and uncomplaining sufferers, from the reign of William till George III.; that they had borne this long and cruel test with loyal resignation; that they had been deprived of property, of arms, of every legal and honourable right. No, it is not suffering, but it is power, it is pride of artificial ascendancy, it is the jealousy arising from exclusive privilege that corrupts the understanding and hardens the heart.' Sydney Smith reviewed the book very favourably in the 'Edinburgh,' saying: 'We are truly glad to agree so entirely with Mr. Parnell upon this great question; we admire his way of thinking, and most cordially recommend his work to the attention of the public.'

A warm friendship existed between William Parnell and Thomas Moore. It was at Avondale that the poet wrote 'The Meeting of the Waters,' and the exact spot from which he is supposed to have viewed the scene was pointed out to me by Mr. John Parnell some time ago.

'Tom Moore's tree'—under whose wide-spreading

branches the poet sat, it is said, when he penned his famous song—is still shown as one of the sights of Avondale. But there has always been uncertainty and mystery on the subject—uncertainty and mystery which, even at the request of William Parnell, Moore declined to clear up. Fourteen years after Parnell's death he revisited the scene, and notes with a touch of pardonable vanity in his journal: 'August 25, 1835. After breakfast the landau and four was again at the door, and with a most clear morning, promising a delicious day, we set out for the Vale of Avoca and the meeting of the waters. I had not been in this beautiful region since the visit (ages ago it seems) which gave birth to the now memorable song, "There is not in the wide world." How wise it was of Scott to connect his poetry with the beautiful scenery of his country. Even indifferent verses derived from such an association obtain a degree of vitality which nothing else could impart to them. I felt this strongly to-day while my companions talked of the different discussions there were afloat as to the particular spot from which I viewed the scene; whether it was the first or second meeting of the waters I meant to describe. I told them that I meant to leave all that in the mystery best suited to such questions. Poor William Parnell, who now no longer looks upon those waters, wrote to me many years since on the subject of those doubts, and, mentioning a seat in the Abbey churchyard belonging to him where it was said I sat while writing the verses, begged me to give him two lines to that effect to be put on the seat. "If you can't tell a lie for me," said he, "in prose, you will, perhaps, to oblige an old friend, do it in verse."'

But Moore did not comply with the request.

Though little inclined to take an active part in politics, Parnell was induced to enter Parliament as member for Wicklow in 1817. But his public career was of brief duration. In 1821 he died in the prime of life, deeply mourned by true and loving friends, and keenly missed by a faithful and sorrowing tenantry. He married the eldest daughter of the Hon. Hugh Howard, of Castle Howard, County Wicklow, by whom he had two children, John Henry and Catherine.

John Henry Parnell led an uneventful life. Residing on his estate at Avondale and interesting himself chiefly in questions of agricultural improvement, he sought by every means in his power to promote the well-being and happiness of his people. A good landlord, a staunch Liberal, a kind friend, he was respected and esteemed by all classes in the country. In his youth he was fond of travel, and during a visit to the United States, in 1834, he met, loved, and married Miss Delia Tudor, the daughter of Commodore Charles Stewart, of the American Navy. This was the one notable event in the life of John Henry Parnell.

Delia Stewart was the daughter of a remarkable man. About the middle of the eighteenth century there were agrarian disturbances in Ulster; and thousands of tenants, smarting under a sense of wrong and despairing of the future, fled across the ocean to seek a refuge and a home in the British colonies of North America. Among these emigrants were the parents of Charles Stewart. They settled in Philadelphia, and there he was born on July 28, 1778. Two years afterwards his father died, and Mrs. Stewart was left to face the world alone with a young and helpless family. But her forlorn position excited the pity and the love of a generous man, and after the lapse of some

time she became the wife of Captain Britton, a member of Congress and Commander of Washington's body-guard. Britton was more than a stepfather to the little Stewarts, and to Charlie he took special fancy, as, growing up, the lad showed a brave spirit and a warm heart. In 1790 Britton introduced him to President Washington, an incident in his life which Charles Stewart never forgot. In old age he often spoke of this famous interview, dwelling particularly upon the effect which it produced on his playmates at Philadelphia. 'Not one of them,' he would say, 'dare knock a chip off my shoulder after that.' Britton intended to have young Stewart trained for some quiet and honourable post in the public service. But the lad had his own plans. He resolved to go to sea. His mother and stepfather protested; but Charlie settled the question one day by running away from school and becoming cabin boy in a coasting schooner. Britton, like a sensible man, accepted the inevitable, and determined to help the youth along the lines he had marked out for himself. With his own brains and grit, and by Britton's influence, Charlie went rapidly ahead, and before he was twenty-one rose to the command of an Indiaman. Then he left the merchant service, and in 1798 entered the navy as lieutenant on board the frigate 'United States.' Thenceforth his success was steady and remarkable.

In 1800 he was sent in the 'Experiment' to deal with French privateers in West Indian waters. During this mission he displayed the fighting qualities which were destined to make him famous, seizing privateers and warships, re-capturing American vessels, scouring the seas, and scattering his enemies. Nor was he less mindful of works of humanity, for this same year he

rescued a number of women and childen who had been wrecked while escaping from a revolution in San Domingo. This gallant action brought a despatch of grateful acknowledgment from the Spanish Governor of the island to the President of the United States.

In 1803 he was despatched on a graver mission. The United States had made war on Tripoli for insults offered to the American flag, and Stewart was sent to co-operate with Captain Trible, who commanded the American squadron in the Mediterranean. In the operations which followed (1803, 1804) Stewart again distinguished himself; supporting Lieutenant Dicatur in his successful efforts to re-capture the frigate 'Philadelphia,' which had fallen into the hand of the Tripolitans; seizing a British and a Greek vessel, which had attempted to run the blockade of the harbour; and leading the attack on the enemy's flotilla in the bombardment of the town. For these services he was promoted to the rank of master-commandant.

He was next sent in the 'Essex' to Tunis, where fresh troubles had arisen. The American Consul, fearing an attack on the consulate, had fled to the fleet. A council of war was held. Operations against the town were suggested. But Stewart said, 'No.' War had not been declared by the United States against Tunis, and the fleet, therefore, could not act. The fleet could not declare war. Congress alone could do that. Negotiations, he urged, should be re-opened with the Bey. This advice was taken. Negotiations were re-opened. They were carried to a successful issue. The Consul was sent back, and peaceful relations were established. Thus Stewart proved himself a skilful diplomatist as well as a hard fighter. His sound constitutional views and admirable tact on this

occasion won the high commendation of President Jefferson.

In 1806 he was promoted to the rank of captain, and, a season of peace having supervened, he returned to the merchant service. But on the breaking out of the war with England in 1812 he once more joined the navy. England claimed the right to search American vessels for English sailors. The United States repudiated this claim, and resolved to resist it by force. The Government at first decided to act on the defensive, collecting the fleet close to the American shore to await events. Stewart and Captain Bambridge, however, pointed out that this would be a fatal policy, and proposed instead that the vessels should put to sea and attack the Britisher wherever he was to be found. Their views finally prevailed, and in January 1813 Stewart was ordered to sail in the frigate 'Constellation' from Washington to Norfolk, and thence to the open sea. But on reaching Norfolk he found a British fleet in the offing. Dropping down the river, the American captain anchored abreast of Craney Island, to cover the fortifications which were in course of construction. There he was greatly exposed to the enemy. But he prepared a plan of defence which baffled his foes and won the admiration of naval experts. The 'Constellation' was anchored in the middle of a narrow channel. On each side of her were seven gunboats. A circle of booms protected the gunboats from being boarded, and enabled them at the same time to maintain a flanking fire on all assailants of the frigate. On board the frigate herself the greatest precautions were taken. The gun-decks were housed, the ports shut in, the stern ladders taken away, and the gangway cleats removed. Not a rope

could be seen hanging over the side, while every means that ingenuity could suggest were devised for embarrassing, bewildering, and out-manœuvring the enemy, should he succeed in coming to close quarters. Then the carronades were charged to the muzzle with musket-balls and depressed to the nearest range, in order to sweep the water around the ship. 'As the frigate was light and unusually high out of the water, it was the opinion of the best judges that, defended as she would certainly have been under the officers who were in her, she could not have been carried without a loss of several hundred men to the enemy, if she could have been carried at all.'[1]

This was clearly the opinion of the English admiral too. For, after reconnoitring several times with great care, he came to the conclusion that no attempt could safely be made to attack the 'Constellation'; the English officers confessing that the vigilance of the ship was too much for them, and insisting that Captain Stewart must be a Scotchman, he was so actively awake.[2] So Stewart remained abreast of Craney Island until the fortifications were completed, when he returned to Norfolk Harbour.

Soon afterwards he was given the command of the 'Constitution,' and in the summer of 1813 sailed in her for the West Indies. In this cruise he captured the British war schooner 'Picton,' a letter of marque under her convoy, and several merchant vessels. Returning to America for repairs, he fell in with two British ships, which gave him chase, but, skilfully evading them, he ran his craft under the guns of Fort Marblehead, and a few days afterwards reached Boston Harbour in perfect safety. There, for a moment, he

[1] Fenimore Cooper, *History of the American Navy.* [2] *Ibid.*

deserted the god of battles for the god of love, and married Delia Tudor, 'the belle of Boston,' daughter of Judge Tudor, who had fought against the British in the War of Independence. But the wedding was scarcely over when the 'Constitution' was once more ready for sea, and Stewart bade farewell to his bride. 'What present shall I bring you home?' he asked as they parted. 'A British frigate,' was the prompt reply. 'I shall bring you two,' said Stewart. In December 1814 he set sail for Europe, seizing two British vessels on the way, destroying one, and sending the other, which had a valuable cargo, to New York. On February 19, 1815, at 1 P.M., the 'Constitution' was off the coast of Spain. A sail was sighted some twelve miles ahead. The first lieutenant reported that she was probably a British ship of 50 guns. 'Whatever may be the number of her guns,' said Stewart, 'I'll fight. Set every stitch of canvas; lay me alongside.' With studding sails alow and aloft the 'Constitution' sped through the waters, and by 4 P.M. she had shortened the distance between herself and the enemy by one-half. Then a second ship hove in sight, and she was soon pronounced to be the consort of the first. But the 'Constitution' sped on. 'Before sunset, my lads,' said Stewart, 'we must flog these Britishers, whether they have one or two gun-decks each.' The 'Constitution' now came up hand over hand, and it was soon seen that the British ships—for so they turned out to be—were ready for action. All three vessels formed (as Stewart put it) an equilateral triangle; the British ships—the 'Cyane,' 34 guns, and the 'Levant,' 21 guns—making the base, the 'Constitution' the apex. Stewart began the action by firing between the British ships. The British responded

with a broadside, which was, however, ineffective owing to the American's excellent strategic position. Stewart now concentrated his fire on the foremost vessel, the 'Levant,' raking her fore and aft. The British replied gallantly, and a hot combat ensued. At this juncture the sternmost ship, the 'Cyane,' crept up to the 'Constitution' and endeavoured to take her on the weather side. But Stewart, handling his ship with admirable skill, out-manœuvred the Britisher, and getting to close quarters poured a tremendous broadside into her. Both ships now maintained a running fire until about 6 P.M., when the enemy, raked, battered, and disabled, was forced to surrender. Stewart, putting a crew on board the frigate, bore down on the 'Levant,' passing under her stern and delivering a well-directed broadside. The 'Levant' briskly returned the fire, striking the 'Constitution' amidships; but another broadside from the American brought down the British colours, and made Stewart the victor of the day. He had kept his word with his bride. He had captured two British frigates in less than two months since they had parted. When the battle was over the British commanders sat in the cabin of the 'Constitution' and discussed the action in the presence of Stewart, each blaming the other for the disaster which had befallen them. 'Gentlemen,' said Stewart, 'it is idle to discuss the question. You both fought gallantly, and neither of you is to blame. No matter what you had done the result would have been the same. If you doubt it, go back to your ships and we will fight the battle over again.'

Stewart now made for home with his two frigates. On the way back he rested in neutral waters at Porto Praya in Santiago, the largest of the Cape Verde

islands. But a British squadron soon hove in sight. Stewart knew that the British would not respect the neutral waters of a weak Power like Portugal; so he slipped his cable and, followed by his prizes, set sail for America. The British squadron gave chase and quickly overhauled the Americans. Fighting was out of the question, for the 'Constitution' was undermanned, her crew being distributed in the prizes. Stewart's only plan, therefore, was to escape the enemy. Signalling the 'Cyane' and the 'Levant' to vary their courses so as to distract and scatter the pursuers, he succeeded in getting all three vessels out of range of the squadron's fire. The 'Constitution' and the 'Cyane' reached New York in safety, but the 'Levant,' pressed by two of the British ships, re-entered Porto Prayo and anchored under the shelter of the forts. The British squadron, ignoring neutral rights, sailed in and recaptured her, and thus the affair ended.

On reaching New York Stewart was welcomed with honours. Congress voted him thanks, a sword, and a gold medal, the State of Pennsylvania thanks and a sword, New York the freedom of the city, while the masses of the people greeted him with the appropriate sobriquet of 'Old Ironsides.'[1]

In September 1814 peace was made with England, and Stewart spent the rest of his life in tranquillity, although he remained still for nearly fifty years in the public service. From 1816 to 1820 he commanded the American squadron in the Mediterranean, from 1820 to 1825 he guarded American interests in the Pacific with characteristic tact, skill, and patriotism.

Afterwards he continued to fill important posts

[1] This was a name first given to the 'Constitution'; it was now transferred to her captain.

afloat or ashore until 1862, when he was placed on the retired list as rear-admiral. The remainder of his days were serenely passed in his house at Bordentown, New Jersey, where he died, full of years and honour, on November 9, 1869. His personal appearance is thus described:

'Commodore Stewart was about five feet nine inches high and of a dignified and engaging presence. His complexion was fair, his hair chestnut, eyes blue, large, penetrating, and intelligent. The cast of his countenance was Roman, bold, strong, and commanding, and his head finely formed. His control of his passions was truly surprising, and under the most irritating circumstances his oldest seamen never saw a ray of anger flash from his eyes. His kindness, benevolence, and humanity were proverbial; but his sense of justice and the requisitions of duty were as unbending as fate. In the moment of great stress and danger he was cool, and quick in judgment, as he was utterly ignorant of fear. His mind was acute and powerful, grasping the greatest or smallest subjects with the intuitive mastery of genius.'

Commodore Stewart was predeceased by his son-in-law, John Henry Parnell, who died in Dublin in 1859; but his daughter, Delia Tudor Stewart Parnell, lived until 1898. In the autumn of 1896 I called on her in Dublin. She had just arrived from America and was recovering from a severe illness. She looked pale and delicate, but was bright and even incisive in conversation, taking a keen interest in political affairs. Her face suggested no likeness to her remarkable son, but she had the calm, determined, self-possessed manner which always distinguished him. She knew her own mind, too. Her views might have been right or wrong,

sensible or the reverse, but she had no doubts. She held her ground firmly in argument, and could not easily be moved from her opinions. She was certainly a woman of convictions, independent, fearless, resolute; indifferent to established conventions and animated by one fixed idea, a rooted hatred of England; or rather, as she herself put it, of 'English dominion.' 'How came it,' I said, 'that your son Charles had such an antipathy to the English?' 'Why should he not?' she answered, with American deliberation. 'Have not his ancestors been always opposed to England? My grandfather Tudor fought against the English in the War of Independence. My father fought against the English in the war of 1812, and I suppose the Parnells had no great love for them. Sir John Parnell fought against the Union and gave up office for Ireland, and Sir Henry was always on the Irish side against England, and so was my son's grandfather William. It was very natural for Charles to dislike the English; but it is not the English whom we dislike, or whom he disliked. We have no objection to the English people; we object to the English dominion. We would not have it in America. Why should they have it in Ireland? Why are the English so jealous of any outside interference in their affairs, and why are they always trying to dip their fingers in everybody's pie? The English are hated in America for their grasping policy; they are hated everywhere for their arrogance, greed, cant, and hypocrisy. No country must have national rights or national aspirations but England. That is the English creed. Well! other people don't see it; and the English are astonished. They want us all to think they are so goody goody. They are simply thieves.'

Although there was no physical resemblance that I could discern between Mrs. Parnell and Charles Stewart Parnell, there were mental traits of likeness which could not be mistaken, and the opinions and sentiments of the mother were certainly the opinions and sentiments of the son.

The living members of the Parnell family are—

John Howard, who now resides at Avondale;

Henry Tudor;

Emily, who married Captain Dickinson;

Theodosia, who married Lieutenant Paget, R.N.;

Anna, who played an important part in the Land League agitation.

Those who have passed away are Fanny, a poetess of considerable ability; William; Hayes; Delia, who married Mr. Livingston Thomson; Sophia, who married Mr. MacDermott, and Charles Stewart, the story of whose life I have now to tell.

NOTE TO CHAPTER I

Parnell's Pedigree

Thomas Parnell, 1685.

- Rev. Thomas Parnell, Archdeacon and Poet. Died 1717. Issue died before him. Succeeded by his brother.
- John Parnell, Judge of the Court of King's Bench, Ireland; married Mary, sister of the Lord Chief Justice Whitshed. Succeeded in 1727 by his only surviving son

John Parnell, M.P. (first Baronet); married Anne, second daughter of the Hon. Michael Ward. Died 1782. Succeeded by his son

Sir John Parnell, who married Letitia Charlotte, second daughter and co-heiress of the Right Hon. Sir Arthur Brooke, Bart., Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1787. Died 1801. Issue

- John Augustus.
- Henry, created Baron Congleton.
- William, of Avondale; married Frances, eldest daughter of the Hon. Hugh Howard. Died 1821, leaving a daughter and a son

John Henry Parnell, Justice of the Peace and Deputy-Lieutenant, married May 31, 1834, Delia Tudor, only daughter of Commodore Charles Stewart, U.S. Navy. Died 1859, leaving issue, amongst other children,

CHARLES STEWART PARNELL.

CHAPTER II

BIRTH AND EARLY DAYS

From Dublin to Rathdrum is a pleasant run of an hour and a half by the Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway along the edge of the sea. Rathdrum is a neat little village, the centre for visiting the Vale of Avoca, Glendalough, and other scenes of infinite beauty in the county of Wicklow.

Avondale lies close by, and thither one day in the September of 1896 I drove to visit the home of Parnell.

The one pervading influence of this beautiful spot is melancholy. Perhaps it is difficult to dissociate the place from the sorrowful memories which linger around the name of its late owner. But, however that may be, a feeling of sadness and gloom possessed me as I drove up the avenue leading to the house—a spacious, even in some measure a noble, residence. There was an appearance of neglect—a look, indeed, as if death had been there, and as if his shadow still overhung the stricken home.

As I alighted I was met at the door by the present owner, Mr. John Parnell—a quiet, courteous, hospitable, kindly gentleman. He, too, looked sad and thoughtful, and there was for a moment in his eyes that far-away look which those who knew Charles Stewart Parnell will never forget.

On entering the hall, which has quite a baronial appearance in miniature, there was a warm, pleasant feeling. There was no fire to be seen, but a genial, comfortable atmosphere which made me at once think of what Parnell used often to say, 'I like a warm house.' In this respect Avondale is perfect. Above the hall is a little gallery, and hung all around are mementoes of the dead Chief. 'In the old days,' said Mr. Parnell, 'we used to have dances in this hall, and the band used to be placed in that gallery.' We lingered for a while in the hall. It is the distinguishing characteristic of the Parnells that they seem to be like no other people. They are absolutely unconventional. They all give you the idea of having pre-occupations quite outside their immediate surroundings. How often did one feel in walking with Parnell that he really was unconscious of your presence, that his thoughts were far, far away from you, and from anything of which you were thinking or talking! He did not strike you at these moments as a practical statesman. He looked a visionary, a poet, a dreamer of dreams—anything but the Charles Stewart Parnell that the world knew him to be. You felt that those eyes, with their inward look, took little notice of anything that was going on around. But, suddenly you said something that specially fixed the attention of the Chief. He at once woke up; the eyes were turned full upon you, the whole body was swung round, and you soon found that not only had the immediate remark which produced this effect been fully taken in, but that all you had been saying for the past half-hour had been fully grasped and most thoroughly considered. Well, all the Parnells have that pre-occupied look that distinguished Charles, but they lack the practical skill and the genius which made him famous.

We walked through the house. Everywhere there was an exceptionally warm, agreeable atmosphere (in very pleasant contrast to the damp outside), but an inexpressible air of sadness all the time. There was absolute silence. The house might have been almost deserted. Indeed, one felt as if one were being shown over the castle or mansion of a great chief who had passed away long ago, and as if nothing had been touched since his death. There was furniture, there were bookcases and books, all looking ancient, all apparently belonging to another time. In the hall hung a picture of the Irish House of Commons. The scene painted was an important debate. Curran was addressing the House. Around sat Grattan, Sir John Parnell, and other well-known figures of the day. But the memories which this picture awakened did not, as it were, belong more completely to the past than did the memories awakened in walking through the rooms at Avondale. We stood at a window: what a beautiful sight met our eyes! The house stands on an eminence; around rise the Wicklow hills; beneath runs the little river Avonmore, through glens and dells that lend a delightful charm to a glorious scene. For quite ten minutes we exchanged not a word. It is the genius of the Parnells to invite silence and to suggest thought. I was thinking how beautiful everything was, and how sad. I said at length exactly what I thought. 'It is most sad to wander through this house and to think what might have been.'

We walked about the grounds, and new glimpses of interest and beauty constantly caught the eye.

We passed through a wooded way close to the river's side—a delightfully solitary spot to commune with oneself. 'This,' said John, 'was Charlie's favourite walk.

He was fond of Avondale. "There is no place like Avondale, Jack," he would say.'

After a ramble around the grounds we returned to luncheon. We sat in the library. It was still a dampish day outside, and there was a nice log fire which gave a pleasant air of comfort to the room. When luncheon was over, John rose, and said, 'Let us walk to the Vale of Avoca. You have never seen it, and it is very beautiful.' To Avoca we strolled along the river-side, and I beheld for the first time the charming spot which Moore has made famous. Gleams of brightness lighted up the beautiful scene, and valley and waters lay bathed in the subdued light of the autumn sun. It was, indeed, a glorious panorama, and Moore's lines were readily recalled, not only by the picture on which we gazed, but by the appropriateness of the concluding lines to what might well have been the aspirations of Parnell amid the storms which closed his checkered life.

> There is not in the wide world a valley so sweet
> As that vale in whose bosom the bright waters meet;
> Oh! the last rays of feeling and life must depart
> Ere the bloom of that valley shall fade from my heart.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Sweet Vale of Avoca! how calm could I rest
> In thy bosom of shade, with the friends I love best,
> When the storms that we feel in this cold world should cease,
> And our hearts, like thy waters, be mingled in peace.

At Avondale, within ten minutes' walk of the Vale of Avoca, Charles Stewart Parnell was born on June 27, 1846.

As a lad he was delicate but wiry, nervous but brave, reserved but affectionate, thoughtful and deliberate, but bright and cheery. He was fond of home life,

and warmly attached to the members of his family, especially to Emily, Fanny, and John, he had few companions outside the home circle, and was very shy with strangers. Delighting in all sorts of games—outdoor and indoor—his favourite pastime was playing at soldiers. He never liked to be beaten at anything, and was resourceful and ingenious, though not too punctilious or scrupulous, in the adoption of means for out-manœuvring his opponents. One day he had a game of soldiers with his sister Fanny. 'He commanded one well-organised division, while she directed the movements of another and opposing force. These never came into actual conflict, but faced one another impassively, while their respective commanders peppered with pop-guns at the enemy's lines. For several days the war continued without apparent advantage being gained by either side. One morning, however, heavy cannonading was heard in the furthest corner of the room (produced by rolling a spiked ball across the floor). Pickets were called in, and in three minutes from the firing of the first shot there was a general engagement all along the line. Strange as it may seem, Fanny's soldiers fell by the score and hundred, while those commanded by her brother refused to waver even when palpably hit. This went on for some time until Fanny's army was utterly annihilated. It was learned, from his own confession, an hour after this Waterloo, that Charles had, before the battle began, glued his soldiers' feet securely to the floor.'[1] He also liked the game of 'follow-my-leader.' 'Charlie,' says a member of the family, 'liked playing the game of "follow-my-leader," but always insisted on being

[1] This story is told in Mr. Sherlock's clever little sketch of Parnell.

the leader.' 'He was very fond of fighting,' says his brother John, 'and would fight with me if he had nobody else.' But there was no malice in his combativeness. He liked fighting for fighting sake, and was quite good friends afterwards with the boy whom he might have thrashed or who might have thrashed him. Insubordinate and headstrong in the hands of those for whom he did not care, he was obedient and docile with the people he loved. Even as a boy he had a keen sense of justice, and was ever ready to assist the weak and helpless. 'As a little boy,' writes his sister, Mrs. Dickinson, 'he showed that consideration for all things helpless and weak, whether human beings or animals, for which he was distinguished in after years.' 'One day,' says his mother, 'he thought the nurse was too severe with his sister Anna. Anna was placed in a room to be punished. Charles got into the room, put Anna on a table, rolled the table into a corner, and, standing in front of it with a big stick, kept the nurse at bay.'

In 1853, when Charlie was just six years, Mr. Parnell took him to England, and put him in charge of a lady who kept a boarding-school for girls near Yeovil, in Somersetshire. It was not the custom to take boys in the school, but an exception was made in the case of little Parnell. Mr. Parnell, so he told the mistress of the school, was anxious that Charlie should 'spend some of his earlier years in England, with someone who would mother him and cure his stammering.' After returning from the mid-summer holidays of 1854 the boy fell seriously ill with typhoid fever. 'I nursed him,' says his schoolmistress, 'for six weeks, night and day, to an entire recovery,' and she adds: 'this formed a link between us which has made every event

of his life most important to me.' He was a special favourite with this lady, who speaks of him as quick, interesting to teach, very affectionate to those he loved (a few), reserved to others; therefore not a great favourite with his companions.' He remained at Yeovil until 1855, and then returned to Avondale. For a time afterwards he was taught by his sister's governess, and later on by a tutor. But he got on with neither. He argued with the governess, defied the tutor, made fun of the clergyman who was engaged to give him religious instruction, and generally infused a spirit of rebellion into the household. Finally he was despatched once more to England, taking up his abode first at the Rev. Mr. Barton's, Kirk Langley, Derbyshire, and next at the Rev. Mr. Wishaw's, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire. At both schools he was idle, read little, resisted the authority of the under masters (though submissive to the head of the establishment), disliked his fellow-pupils, and was disliked by them.

On one occasion he was construing a Greek play and mistranslated a word. Wishaw corrected him, but Parnell argued the point. Wishaw said: 'Well, look the word out in the Lexicon,' passing the book towards him. Parnell looked into the Lexicon, and saw that it bore out Wishaw's views; but coolly answered: 'Well, the Lexicon says what you say, but I expect the Lexicon is wrong.' He cared only for two things, cricket and mathematics, and was proficient in the game and in the science. Still, he was not popular, either with the masters or the boys, though the one recognised his sharpness and ability and the other his manliness and pluck. Even at school he showed the reserve and aloofness which were among his traits in after years; and he was always glad when the vacation

came round to find himself back at Avondale free and among friends and favourites.

'I well remember,' says one who was at Chipping Norton with Parnell, 'the day the Parnells (for John accompanied Charles) came. Their mother brought them. She wore a green dress, and Wishaw came to me and said: "I say, B——, I have met one of the most extraordinary women I have ever seen—the mother of the Parnells. She is a regular rebel. I have never heard such treason in my life. Without a note of warning she opened fire on the British Government, and by Jove she did give it us hot. I have asked her to come for a drive, to show her the country, and you must come too for protection." So we went for a drive, but my presence did not prevent Mrs. Parnell from giving her views about the iniquities of the English Government in Ireland.'

My informant added: 'We liked John, who was a very good, genial fellow; but we did not like Charles. He was arrogant and aggressive, and he tried to sit on us, and we tried to sit on him. That was about the state of the case.'

At this time, and for many years afterwards, he was subject to nervous attacks and would walk in his sleep. When the nervous attacks were on he never liked to be left alone, and would send for some person to remain with him. The feeling continued even when he had grown up to man's estate, and was, indeed, in Parliament.

One night, in the days when the British Ministers were at their wits' end to devise means for suppressing the terrible agitation, he was alone at Avondale. No one was in the house except the old housekeeper (who had been his nurse), her husband, and another servant. In

the early morning the master's bell was vigorously rung, and old Peter and his wife came up. Parnell lay in bed wide awake, looking nervous and distressed. 'I am sorry,' he said, 'to ring you up, but the fact is I am not well, and have not slept all night. I am better now, but feel nervous, and would like someone to stop with me for a while.' Old Peter remained, and Parnell talked away on a variety of domestic topics until a couple of hours had passed, when he fell quietly asleep. His somnambulistic habits also continued after he left school and college. But he ultimately cured himself by tying his leg to the bed, an inconvenient but effectual remedy. He was at all times very fond of dogs, but very much afraid of hydrophobia. One day a favourite dog jumped on him in play, and pressed his teeth through the sleeve of his coat. Feeling the pressure he thought he was bitten, and ordered a car to drive for the doctor. 'But,' said his old housekeeper, 'perhaps the dog has not bitten you at all.' And on examination that was found to be the case. 'Ah! I am glad, Mary,' said he, 'for I would not like to kill him, which they say you should do if a dog bites you.' 'And foolish to say so,' urged Mary, 'for the harm is done.' 'You are very wise, Mary,' said Parnell, and he went off with the dog for a ramble over the fields.

In July 1865 Parnell went to Cambridge University. 'He was entered,' says a correspondent, 'as a pensioner on the boards of Magdalene College, Cambridge, July 1, 1865, and came into residence the following October. The rooms allotted to him were on the ground floor of the right cloister in the Pepysian buildings, looking out on the college close and immediately beneath the famous Pepysian Library. Before Parnell came up, Mrs. Parnell forewarned the

tutor (Mr. Mynors Bright) that her son was given to somnambulism. The tutor accordingly instructed the college servant to sleep in an adjacent gyp-room. On the first night of his residence, however, Parnell, walking round, but not in his sleep, to take stock of his new tenement, discovered the intruder, and promptly expelled him.

'Parnell showed considerable aptitude for mathematics. One of his tutors, Mr. F. Patrick, whose lectures he attended, used often to describe how Parnell, when he had been given the ordinary solution of a problem, would generally set about to find whether it could not be solved equally well by some other method.

'On one occasion, after the college gates were closed, there being some town and gown commotion in the street outside, Parnell ran up to Mr. Patrick as he was going to ascertain the cause, exclaiming: "Sir, do let me go out to protect you."' But his career was undistinguished at Cambridge; and indeed the place was utterly uncongenial to him. Whether he would have taken more kindly to Irish schools and colleges may be a matter of doubt. But he certainly regarded his school and college days in England with peculiar aversion. The English he did not like. 'These English,' he would say to his brother John, 'despise us because we are Irish; but we must stand up to them. That's the way to treat the Englishman—stand up to him.'

Parnell's English training had undoubtedly something to do in the making of him, and if it did not make him very Irish, it certainly made him very anti-English.

In 1869 he left Cambridge without taking a degree.

He was, in fact, 'sent down,' under circumstances which have been related to me by Mr. Wilfrid A. Gill, Fellow and Tutor of Magdalene College, Cambridge: 'The story of Parnell's being sent down from college has never been authoritatively told, and has often been misstated or exaggerated. The case came (at first) before the Cambridge County Court on May 21, 1869, and the course which the college subsequently took was the usual one in such instances of misconduct. A Mr. Hamilton, a merchant of Harestone, sought to recover 33*l.* as compensation for alleged assault. To avoid the appearance of blackmailing, he undertook, if successful, to devote the proceeds of the suit to Addenbrooke's Hospital. He stated in court that on Saturday, May 1, about 10 P.M., he saw a man lying across the path in the station road drunk, another man (Mr. Bentley) standing over him. Asking if he could be of any assistance, Bentley replied to him, "We want none of your d——d help." Parnell then, springing up, struck witness on the face and collarbone, and kicked him on the knee. Hamilton's man retaliated by striking Parnell.

'This was the plaintiff's statement.

'Parnell's statement in reply was as follows. He, with three friends, drove in a fly to the station between 9 and 10 P.M. to take some light refreshment, "sherry, champagne, and biscuit," at the restaurant. In half an hour they prepared to return home. Parnell, with one of them, sat down and waited in the station road, while the others went in search of a fly. Meanwhile two men passing by exclaimed: "Hullo, what's the matter with this 'ere cove," or words to that effect. Bentley replied that he wanted no interference. Hamilton answered in gross language. Then he

(Parnell) first interposed, striking at Hamilton but missing him. Hamilton next struck Parnell, whereupon Parnell knocked him down. Hamilton's man then attacked Parnell, who knocked him down also, though he at once offered a hand to raise him. Parnell never kicked Hamilton. A police constable corroborated Parnell's statement that he (Parnell) was perfectly sober. After other evidence had been called, Parnell's counsel admitted to some fault on his client's part, and stated that he would not resist a verdict. He asked, however, for nominal damages, little harm really having been done; and there also seemed to be some attempt at extortion.

'The judge held that, the assault being admitted, the damages should be substantial. The jury, after some consideration, found damages for twenty guineas.

'On May 26 a college meeting was convened, at which it was resolved to send down Parnell for the remainder of the term in consequence of the misconduct proved against him. There being only two weeks before the end of the term, the actual punishment was not a severe one, and, had Parnell wished it, there was nothing to prevent his resuming residence in the following term. He did not, however, return to Cambridge.'

Up to this time Parnell had paid no attention to Irish affairs. He had probably never read an Irish history or political tract. He knew nothing of the career of his great-grandfather, Sir John Parnell, or his grand-uncle, Sir Henry, or his grandfather, William Parnell. At Avondale politics were tabooed, and when Charles was there he spent his time fishing or shooting, riding or playing cricket. Ireland was almost a closed book to him. Something he had certainly heard of

the rebellion of 1798 from the peasants in the neighbourhood, but the effect of these stories was transient.

How came Parnell, then, to turn his attention to Irish affairs? He has himself answered this question. He has told us that it was the Fenian movement that first awakened his interest in Ireland.

Most of my readers know that about the year 1859 two men who had taken part in the Young Ireland rising—John O'Mahony and James Stephens—formed a political organisation for the purpose of separating Ireland from England and of establishing an Irish republic. This organisation, called by its founders and members the Irish Revolutionary Brotherhood, was popularly known as the Fenian Society. It grew steadily in numbers and influence. Fenian bodies were scattered throughout Ireland, Scotland, England, and America, and within five years of its formation it had already become a power in the land.

In 1863 a Fenian newspaper, the 'Irish People,' was founded, under the management of John O'Leary, assisted by Thomas Clarke Luby and Charles Kickham. Its office was within a stone's-throw of Dublin Castle, and there, under the very shadow of the authorities, it preached week by week a crusade of insurrection and war. Among the contributors to the 'Irish People' was a handsome young girl, who used to come to the office accompanied by a tall lanky youth. Entering the editor's room, she would place her 'copy' in his hands and depart. The 'copy' generally consisted of some stirring verses which breathed a spirit of treason and revolt. The girl was Miss Fanny Parnell, and the youth her brother John. Fenianism soon invaded Avondale. The political indifference which had hitherto

prevailed there gradually disappeared, and Ireland came to have a foremost place in the thoughts of the family. Mrs. Parnell especially took a keen interest in the movement, and did not hesitate to express her views and sympathies in the Government circles in which she moved. Lord Carlisle, the Lord Lieutenant in 1864, was a friend of the Parnell household. Mrs. Parnell, both at his table and at her own, felt no hesitation in condemning British misrule and justifying Irish discontent. In 1865 there was a crisis: the Government swooped down on the 'Irish People,' and arrested the editor and some of the leading members of the staff. State trials, the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and an abortive insurrection followed. Fenianism was the question of the hour. People thought and spoke of nothing else. The whole empire watched the Fenian trials with interest and anxiety. In the dock the Fenian prisoners demeaned themselves like men of faith, courage, and honesty. They neither faltered nor flinched. Baffled for the moment, they believed that their cause would yet triumph, and they boldly told their judges that they neither repented nor despaired. 'You ought to have known,' said Judge Fitzgerald, in passing sentence on O'Leary, 'that the game you entered upon was desperate—hopeless.'

O'Leary. 'Not hopeless.'

Judge. 'You ought further to have known that insurrection in this country or revolution in this country meant not insurrection alone, but that it meant a war of extermination.'

O'Leary. 'No such thing.'

Judge. 'You have lost.'

O'Leary. 'For the present.'

Judge. 'It is my duty to announce to you that the

sentence of the court is such as may deter others—we hope it will.'

O'Leary. 'I hope not.'

Judge. 'The sentence of the court is that you be detained in penal servitude for twenty years.'

'As long as there are men in my country,' said Luby, 'prepared to expose themselves to every difficulty and danger, and who are prepared to brave captivity—and even death itself, if need be—this country cannot be lost.'

Years afterwards Isaac Butt, the advocate who defended almost all the Fenian prisoners, wrote of them:

'Whatever obloquy gathered round them at first, there are few men who now deny to the leaders of the Fenian conspiracy the merits of perfect sincerity, of a deep and honest conviction of the righteousness of their cause, and of an unselfish and disinterested devotion to the cause. I was placed towards most of them in a relation which gave me some opportunity of observing them, in circumstances that try men's souls. Both I and those that were associated with me in that relation have often been struck by their high-mindedness and truthfulness, that shrunk with sensitiveness from subterfuges which few men in their position would have thought wrong. No mean or selfish instruction ever reached us. Many, many, many messages were conveyed to us which were marked by a punctilious and almost over-strained anxiety to avoid even a semblance of departure from the strictest line of honour. There was not one of them who would have purchased safety by a falsehood, by a concession that would have brought dishonour on his cause, or by a disclosure that would have compromised the safety of a companion. It seems

like exaggeration to say this, but this is a matter on which I can write as a witness, and therefore am bound by the responsibility of one. I know that my testimony would be confirmed by all who had the same means of observing them as myself. The conviction was forced upon us all, that whatever the men were, they were no vulgar revolutionists disturbing their country for any base or selfish purpose; they were enthusiasts of great heart and lofty minds, and in the bold and unwavering courage with which one and all they met the doom which the law pronounced upon their crime against its authority, there was a startling proof that their cause and their principles had power to inspire in them the faith and the endurance which elevated suffering into martyrdom.'

No one followed the Fenian trials with keener interest than Mrs. Parnell. But her interest was not merely of a passive character. Her house in Temple Street, Dublin, was placed under police surveillance. One night a batch of detectives paid a surprise visit and insisted on searching the premises. Mrs. Parnell (who was alone with her daughter) protested, but the police remained; the daughter left, and spent the night at Hood's Hotel, Great Brunswick Street. The police went on with their work, and were rewarded for their pains by finding a sword, which they carried off in triumph. The sword belonged to Charles, who was at that time an officer in the Wicklow Militia. 'D—— their impudence in taking my sword,' he said afterwards, on hearing the news, 'but I shall make them give it back precious soon' (which he did). 'Perhaps one day I will give the police something better to do than turning my sister into the street. I call it an outrage on the part of the Government of this country.'

But the event which was destined to turn Parnell's thoughts fully to Irish politics now occurred. In September 1867 two Fenian leaders, Kelly and Deasy, were arrested in Manchester. Their comrades in the city resolved to rescue them. Accordingly, as the van conveying them was on its way from the police court to the jail at Bellevue it was attacked. The prisoners were liberated, and a policeman, Sergeant Brett, was shot dead in the struggle. Many Fenians were arrested for complicity in this affray, including Allen, Larkin, Condon, and O'Brien, who were tried, convicted, and sentenced to death. In the dock they showed a bold front, a dauntless spirit, and an abiding faith in their cause. All protested their innocence of the crime of murder, but did not shrink from the charge of treason. Indeed, they gloried in it. 'No man in this court,' said Allen, 'regrets the death of Sergeant Brett more than I do, and I positively say in the presence of the Almighty and ever-living God that I am innocent—ay, as innocent as any man in this court. I don't say this for the sake of mercy. I want no mercy, I'll have no mercy. I'll die, as many thousands have died, for the sake of their beloved land and in defence of it.'

'I was not even present,' said Condon,[1] 'when the rescue took place. But I do not accuse the jury of wilfully wishing to convict, but I believe they were prejudiced. We have, however, been convicted, and, as a matter of course, we accept our death. We are not afraid to die. I only trust that those who are to be tried after us will have a fair trial, and that our blood will satisfy the craving which, I understand, exists. You will soon send us before God, and I am perfectly prepared to go. I have nothing to regret, or

[1] Condon was afterwards reprieved.

to retract, or take back. I can only say, "God save Ireland!"' 'God save Ireland!' repeated all the prisoners, and 'God save Ireland!' has since become a political watchword in the country.

All England was profoundly moved by this Manchester affair. Irish discontent and Irish treason were painfully brought home to the English people. But the first feeling was one of vengeance and retaliation, when the mob which gathered round the gaol the night before the execution, shouting, cheering, and reviling the men within, singing 'Rule, Britannia,' performing break-down dances, and bursting into yells of glee, only too faithfully represented the general feeling of triumph and satisfaction at the fate of the doomed men. On the morning of November 23, 1867, Allen, Larkin, and O'Brien perished on the scaffold. Nothing can, perhaps, better show the chasm which separates English from Irish political opinion than the way in which the news of their execution was received in each country. In England it awoke a pæan of joy: in Ireland it produced a growl of indignation and horror. In the one country they were regarded as murderers and traitors, in the other as heroes and martyrs. Up to this time a section of the Home Rulers was more or less out of sympathy with the Fenian movement. But the Manchester executions brought all Irish Nationalists into line. 'Commemorative funerals' were held in almost every principal city in Ireland, and Constitutional-Nationalists and Revolutionists marched side by side in honour of the Manchester martyrs. 'The Dublin procession,' says Mr. A. M. Sullivan, himself a persistent opponent of Fenianism, 'was a marvellous display. The day was cold, wet, and gloomy, yet it was computed that 150,000 persons participated in the

demonstration, 60,000 of them marching in a line over a route some three or four miles in length. As the three hearses, bearing the names of the executed men, passed through the streets, the multitudes that lined the streets fell on their knees, every head was bared, and not a sound was heard save the solemn notes of the "Dead March in Saul" from the bands, or the sobs that burst occasionally from the crowd. At the cemetery gate the procession formed into a vast assemblage, which was addressed by Mr. Martin in feeling and forcible language, expressive of the national sentiment on the Manchester executions. At the close once more all heads were bared, a prayer was offered, and the mourning thousands peacefully sought their homes.' To Englishmen these demonstrations were only a proof of Irish sympathy with crime. A policeman had been killed by a gang of Irish revolutionists, and Ireland went mad over the transaction. That was all that Englishmen saw in the Manchester celebrations. But Parnell, despite his English surroundings, caught the Irish feeling on the instant. 'It was no murder,' he said, then and afterwards. It was not the intention of Allen, Larkin, and O'Brien to kill Sergeant Brett. Their sole object was to rescue their comrades. And why not? Was England to sit in judgment on Fenianism, or upon anything Irish? The Irish were justified in overthrowing the English rule, if they could. The Fenians who rescued Kelly and Deasy had a better case than the English Government which punished them. They acted with pluck and manliness. What they did they did in the open day. A few Irishmen faced the police and mob of a hostile city, and snatched their comrades from the clutches of the law—the law to which they morally owed no allegiance. The rescue

was a gallant act, the execution a brutal and a cowardly deed. A strong and generous Government would never have carried out the extreme penalties of the law. But the English people were panic-stricken. The presence of Fenianism in their midst filled them with alarm, and they clamoured for blood. The killing of Sergeant Brett was no murder; the execution of the Fenians was.[1]

That was the Irish view of the case, and that was the view of Parnell. But, though the execution of Allen, Larkin, and O'Brien made Parnell think about Ireland, he did not for several years afterwards take an active part in Irish politics. He never did anything in a hurry. He thought out every question. He looked carefully around before taking any forward step. But when once he put his hand to the plough he never turned back. When I was at Avondale in 1896 I met a middle-aged man, a retainer of the family, who remembered Parnell as a boy and a man. He said to me: 'You see, sir, if it was only the picking up of that piece of stick (pointing to the ground), Master Charles would take about half an hour thinking of it. He never would do anything at once, and when he grew up it was just the same. I would sometimes ask him to make some alterations about the place. "I will think of that, Jim," he would say, and I would think he would forget all I said; but he would come back, maybe in two days' time, and say, "I have considered it all," and would do what I asked, or not, just as he liked.'

[1] It is quite clear that it was not the intention of the Fenians to kill Sergeant Brett. Brett was on guard inside the van. He was asked to give up the keys, but refused. Allen then fired to force the lock of the door. The ball penetrated, and killed Brett. Shaw, a police-constable, swore at the trial that it was his impression that Allen fired to knock the lock off.—*Annual Register*, 1867.

Parnell's favourite pastime was cricket. He became captain of the Wicklow Eleven, and threw himself with zest into the game. A strict disciplinarian, always bent on victory, and ever ready to take advantage of every chance (which the rules allowed) to outwit his opponents, reserved, uncompromising, self-willed, he was obeyed and trusted rather than courted or liked.

'Before Mr. Parnell entered politics,' says one who knew him in those days, 'he was pretty well known in the province of Leinster in the commendable character of cricketer. We considered him ill-tempered and a little hard in his conduct of that pastime. For example, when the next bat was not up to time, Mr. Parnell, as captain of the fielders, used to claim a wicket. Of course he was within his right in doing so, but his doing it was anything but relished in a country where the game is never played on the assumption that this rule will be enforced. In order to win a victory he did not hesitate to take advantage of the strict letter of the law. On one occasion a match was arranged between the Wicklow team and an eleven of the Phœnix Club, to be played on the ground of the latter in the Phœnix Park. Mr. Parnell's men, with great trouble and inconvenience, many of them having to take long drives in the early morning, assembled on the ground. A dispute occurred between Mr. Parnell and the captain of the Phœnix team. The Wicklow men wished their own captain to give in, and let the match proceed. Mr. Parnell was stubborn, and, rather than give up his point, marched his growling eleven back. That must have been a pleasant party so returning without their expected day's amusement, but the Captain did not care. In later years Mr. Parnell used

to use the Irish party much as he used the Wicklow eleven.'[1] He was very fond of taking long rides in the country with his sister, Mrs. Dickinson. 'Used he ever,' I asked her, 'to talk politics upon these occasions?' She said: 'No. He was completely wrapped up in his family, and our conversations were chiefly about family matters and country life. The only political incident which seemed to affect him was the execution of the Manchester martyrs. He was very indignant at that. It first called forth his aversion for England, and set him thinking of Ireland. But he rarely talked politics to any of us. He brooded a great deal, and was always one to keep things to himself.' 'Did you ever see him read in those days?' I asked another member of his family. 'The only book I ever saw him read,' he said, 'was that (pointing to Youatt's "The Horse"), and he knew that very well.'

Within a few miles of Avondale was Parnell's shooting-lodge, Aughavannah. Aughavannah was originally a barrack, built in 1798 for the soldiers who scoured that part of the country for rebels. The barrack ultimately fell into the hands of the Parnells, and was converted into a shooting-lodge; here Parnell spent several weeks in the autumn of each year. At the back of the barrack was a granite stone, where —so runs the tradition—the rebels sharpened their pikes. Parnell was very fond of showing this stone to his friends, and would, when in the humour, tell them stories of '98. Here is one of them. A rebel was seized by the soldiers. He was court-martialled, and ordered to be whipped to death. The sentence was carried out, but the lashes were inflicted on his belly instead of on his back. The old lodge-keeper at

[1] *Pall Mall Budget.*

Avondale, who had witnessed the scene, would say how the man shrieked in his agony and cried for mercy, calling upon the colonel of the regiment, Colonel Yeo, until his lacerated body fell, bleeding and torn, lifeless to the ground. Parnell seems to have had some knowledge of the rebel Holt, picked up, no doubt, from the tradition of the peasants rather than the memoirs of the insurgent himself. Holt was a Wicklow man and Protestant, and had led the rebels in his native county with courage, skill, and chivalry. Parnell always felt that if there had been many chiefs like Holt the rebellion might have had a different termination. But Parnell was very proud of Wicklow and Wicklow men. 'I am,' he would say, 'an Irishman first but a Wicklow man afterwards.'

In 1871 he went to America on a visit to his brother John, who had settled in Alabama, and there he remained a twelvemonth. 'While he was with you at that time,' I asked John, 'did he show any inclination to go into politics or take up any career?' John said: 'No, he never talked politics. But he was never a good man at conversation; and you could never very easily find out what he was thinking about. If something turned up to draw him, then he would talk; and I was often surprised to find on those occasions that he knew things of which he never spoke before. Something practical was always necessary to draw him. One day we called to see a State Governor. When we came away, Charlie surprised me by saying, "You see that fellow despises us because we are Irish. But the Irish can make themselves felt everywhere if they are self-reliant and stick to each other. Just think of that fellow, where he has come from, and yet he despises the Irish." That always stuck in Charlie—that the Irish

were despised. You see,' continued John, 'none of us take in many things at once. But we are awful to stick to anything we take up. The idea that the Irish were despised was always in Charlie's mind. But you would never know it if some particular thing did not happen to stir him up at the moment. In those days he was ready to take offence, and was even quarrelsome, though he worked himself out of all that afterwards. One day I took him to see a house I was building for a man, an Irishman too. The man complained of something I had done. I did not object. It was quite fair, and we were very good friends. While he was pointing out these things to me, Charlie went quietly over the house, and then, coming back, walked up to the man and said very coolly: "I tell you what it is, the house is a deal too good for you." "You're a d——d liar," said the man. In an instant Charlie's coat was off, and it was only by the greatest effort that I prevented them from flying at one another. We then all went off to luncheon, and were as hearty as possible. We all laughed at the row, and I said there was no doubt but we were all Irishmen. The man—his name was Ryan, a very good fellow—told us that in America they always say "it takes two Irishmen to make a row, three to make a revolt, and four to make an insurrection." Charlie said if we knew our powers we could make ourselves felt in America and everywhere else.'

While in America Parnell was nearly killed in a railway accident. He and John were travelling together. There was a collision on the line. John was flung to the bottom of the car with great violence, and there he lay bruised and unconscious. Parnell was unhurt. Seeing John on the ground, he said to the other occupant of the car, 'My brother is killed.

I expect we shall be killed next, for this car is certain to tumble down the embankment.' The car, however, did not tumble down the embankment, and Parnell escaped without a scratch. John was laid up with a severe illness after the accident, and Parnell nursed him all the time. 'No one,' said John, 'could have been a better nurse than Charlie; he was thoughtful, patient, and gentle as a woman.'

In 1872 Parnell, accompanied by John, returned to Avondale. Vote by ballot had just been extended to Ireland. The measure drew Parnell's attention once more to politics. He thought it was of greater practical importance than either the Irish Church Act or the Land Act, for it emancipated the voters. 'Now,' he said, 'something can be done if full advantage will be taken of this Ballot Act.' His sympathies had gone out to the Fenians after the Manchester executions. But he did not see how Fenianism was to be practically worked. The Ballot Act first suggested to him a mode of practical operation. The Irish voter was now a free man. He could send whom he liked to Parliament. He was master of the situation. An independent Irish party, free from the touch of English influence, was the thing wanted, and this party could be elected under the Ballot Act.

One morning in 1873 the two brothers were at breakfast at Avondale. John, who was essentially a Democrat, said, 'Well, Charlie, why don't you go into Parliament? You are living all alone here, you represent the family, and you ought to take an interest in public affairs. Our family were always mixed up with politics, and you ought to take your place. Go in and help the tenants, and join the Home Rulers.' Parnell answered—knocking the tip of an egg and

peering into it suspiciously, as if its state was much more important to him than Parliament—'I do not see my way. I am in favour of the tenants and Home Rule, but I do not know any of the men who are working the movement.' John replied: 'It is easy to know the men. Go and see them.' 'Ah,' replied Parnell, 'that is what I don't quite see. I must look more around for myself first; I must see a little more how things are going; I must make out my own way. The whole question is English dominion. That is what is to be dealt with, and I do not know what the men in these movements intend.' Then, with a little banter, in which he occasionally indulged, he added, 'But, John, why don't you go into Parliament? Why should not we make a start with you? You are the head of the family. In fact, Avondale is more yours than mine. Do you lead the way.'

This little conversation satisfied John that Parnell had been thinking more of politics than his family at all suspected, though with characteristic reticence he kept his own counsel. Nor did he even after this show any disposition to resume the subject. He relapsed into his old state of apparent indifference, devoting himself mainly to family and local affairs.

He had, indeed, become a member of the Synod of the Disestablished Church, but he took more interest in the mining operations which he had then commenced on his estate than in the affairs of that institution. And so the last days of the year 1873 found Parnell still living the life of a quiet country gentleman, still leaving politics severely alone.

CHAPTER III

THE HOME RULE MOVEMENT

'WELL,' said an Old Irelander to me towards the end of the year 1870, 'out of evil comes good. The unfortunate Fenians have made the English disestablish the Church (1869) and pass the Land Act (1870). But, poor devils! what good have they done for themselves? Penal servitude and the gallows.' 'You are right enough, sir,' said a Fenian who was standing by. 'The difference between the Whigs and Fenians is, the Fenians do good for Ireland but no good for themselves, the Whigs do good for themselves and no good for Ireland.' 'Begad, I believe you are right,' said the Old Irelander, who was a frank and genial old fellow.

Old Irelander and Fenian were both right. Fenianism had roused the English conscience, had 'rung the chapel bell,' and the result was disestablishment and the first great measure of land reform. Mr. Gladstone has made the matter very plain. 'It has only been since the termination of the American war,' he said, 'and the appearance of Fenianism that the mind of this country has been greatly turned to the consideration of Irish affairs. . . . In my opinion, and in the opinion of many with whom I communicated, the Fenian conspiracy has had an important influence with respect to Irish policy; but it has not been an influence in

determining, or in affecting in the slightest degree, the convictions which we have entertained with respect to the course proper to be pursued in Ireland. The influence of Fenianism was this—that when the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, when all the consequent proceedings occurred, when the overflow of mischief came into England itself, when the tranquillity of the great city of Manchester was disturbed, when the Metropolis itself was shocked and horrified by an inhuman outrage, when a sense of insecurity went abroad far and wide—the right honourable gentleman [Mr. Gathorne-Hardy] was, better than we, cognisant of the extent to which the inhabitants of the different towns of the country were swearing themselves in as special constables for the maintenance of life and property—then it was when these phenomena came home to the popular mind, and produced that attitude of attention and preparedness on the part of the whole of the population of this country which qualified them to embrace in a manner foreign to their habits in other times the vast importance of the Irish controversy.'

Again, answering Mr. Gathorne-Hardy in the House of Commons on April 3, 1868, he said:

'The right hon. gentleman says, "Why did you not deal with the Irish Church in 1866, when you asked for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act?" My answer is, for a perfectly plain and simple reason. In the first place, circumstances were not ripe then as they are now. Circumstances, I repeat, were not ripe, in so far as we did not then know so much as we know now with respect to the intensity of Fenianism.'

But though Fenianism forced disestablishment and land reform, the Fenians cared little either for the

Church or the land. Their movement was purely political, and none of the leaders at that time saw any advantage in associating a struggle for national freedom with an agitation for the redress of material grievances. Accordingly, while the Constitutionalists pushed forward their demands for Church and land reform, the Fenians concentrated themselves on a movement for the release of their comrades who had been sent to penal servitude in the years 1865, 1866, and 1867.

In 1868 the first Amnesty Association was formed. Isaac Butt became its president.

Butt was one of the most remarkable men who have appeared in Irish politics during the past half-century. Born at Glenfin, in the County Donegal, in 1813, he was educated at the Royal School, Raphoe, and entered Trinity College, Dublin (as a scholar) in 1832. He took his degree in 1835, became LL.B. in 1836, and M.A. and LL.D. in 1840. As one of the founders and for a time editor of the Dublin 'University Magazine,' he showed the culture and literary skill which always distinguished him. In 1836 he was appointed Whately Professor of Political Economy at Dublin University, and in 1838 he was called to the Bar. In 1841 he gave up his professorship, and thenceforth devoted himself absolutely to law and public affairs. Chosen in 1840 by the Municipal Corporation of Dublin—then a Tory stronghold—to defend their privileges before the House of Lords and to oppose the Irish Municipal Reform Bill, he was, in recognition of his able but unsuccessful efforts, elected an alderman of the Reformed Corporation. He now became one of the leading champions of Conservatism in the City, and was singled out to confront O'Connell in

the famous three days' debate on Repeal, which took place in the City Hall in February 1843.

In 1844 he was called to the Inner Bar, and in the same year he founded the 'Protestant Guardian,'[1] which became a leading Tory organ in the Press. But his Toryism did not prevent him from defending the Young Ireland leader, Gavan Duffy, in 1848, or indeed from showing a general appreciation of the Nationalist position. He first entered Parliament in 1852 as the Tory member for Harwich; but in the general election of the same year he was returned as a Liberal Conservative for Youghal, which borough he continued to represent until 1865.

In 1865, when the Fenian prisoners looked around for leading counsel to defend them, they at once fixed on Butt. He stood in the front rank of his profession, he had been associated with the Young Ireland trials, and his politics were nothing to men who despised Whig and Tory alike. Butt flung himself zealously into the cause of his clients. He practically gave up all other business at the Bar, and his advocacy of the hopeless case of the rebels was among the most earnest and brilliant of his forensic efforts. From 1865 to 1869 these Fenian trials dragged on, and towards the end Butt became the friend as well as the advocate of the prisoners. The purity of their intentions, the uprightness of their aims, their courage, their honesty, their self-sacrifice, produced a deep impression on the generous and impulsive advocate, and made him feel that there was something essentially rotten in the State when such men were driven to such desperate courses.

[1] Afterwards incorporated in the *Warder*. See article on 'Butt' in *Dictionary of National Biography*.

'Mr. Gladstone,' he exclaimed, 'said that Fenianism taught him the intensity of Irish disaffection. It taught me more and better things. It taught me the depth, the breadth, the sincerity of that love of fatherland that misgovernment had tortured into disaffection, and misgovernment, driving men to despair, had exaggerated into revolt.' And again he says: 'The conviction forced itself upon everyone that the men whom they saw meet their fate with heroism and dignity were not a mere band of assassins actuated by base motives, but real earnest patriots, moved by unselfish thoughts, and risking all in that which they believed to be their country's cause. The lofty faith of their principles and their cause which breathed through the words of many of them as they braved the sentence which closed upon them all hope made it impossible for anyone to doubt their sincerity—difficult even for those who most disapproved of their enterprise to withhold from them the tribute of compassion and respect.'

Butt was not content with advocating the cause of the Fenian prisoners when they stood in the dock. He followed them to the prison cells, and finally led the movement which was initiated towards the end of 1868 to obtain their release. One of the first of the great amnesty meetings was held at Cabra, near Dublin, in October 1868. Butt took the chair. It was an extraordinary gathering. Quite 200,000 people were present. Butt himself describes the scene: 'Words of far more power than any I can command would fail to give expression to emotions I can but faintly recall, when I stood in the presence of 200,000 human beings, and was conscious that every eye in that vast assemblage was turned upon me, and felt that every heart in that mighty multitude—far, far beyond the limit to which

the human voice could reach—was throbbing with the belief that I was giving utterance to the one thought that was actuating all. That scene was worth the memories of a life. Into every human form in that great multitude God had breathed the breath of life as each of them became a living soul. In the voice of that multitude spoke the spirit which that breath had sent into the heart of man. There was an awe and solemnity in the presence of so many living souls. Dense masses of men, outnumbering the armies that decided the fate of Europe on the field of Waterloo, covered a space of ground upon the far-off verge of which their forms were lost in distance. Around that verge the gorgeous banners of a hundred trades' unions, recalling to the mind the noblest glories of the Italian free republics, glistened in the brightness of a clear autumn sun. Words fail to describe—imagination and memory fail in reproducing—the image of a scene which, like recollections of Venice, is so different from all the incidents of ordinary life that it seems like the remembrance of a vision or a dream.'

Amnesty meetings were now held throughout the country. Amnesty became a rallying cry. Constitutional-Nationalists and Fenians stood shoulder to shoulder on the amnesty platforms. No word was now raised against the Fenians by any Home Ruler; and even outside the Nationalist ranks altogether there was a feeling of admiration and pity for the men who had shown their readiness to sacrifice liberty and life in the cause they held dearer than both. Many people did not see that these amnesty meetings were making all the time for Home Rule. They were bringing all Irish Nationalists, constitutional and revolutionary, together. They were inspiring Isaac Butt, they were inspiring

the whole country, with intense national feeling. The farmers might be content with land reform; the old Catholic Whigs might be content with disestablishment; but outside there was a new generation who believed that all would be lost if national freedom were not gained. Accordingly, neither disestablishment nor land reform checked for one moment the flowing tide. Indeed, the first measure served only to accelerate it by driving discontented Protestants into the National ranks. The upshot was the establishment of the 'Home Government Association of Ireland.'[1] On May 19, 1870, a remarkable gathering met at the Bilton Hotel, Dublin. There were Protestants and Catholics, Tories and Liberals, Orangemen and Fenians—all come together to protest against the legislative union with Great Britain.

Speaking, some years afterwards, to a Fenian leader who was at this meeting, he said to me: 'I went under an assumed name to watch the proceedings. The suppression of the rising in 1867 and the imprisonment of our people did not damp our energies a bit. We kept working away just the same as ever, with this difference, that we had thousands of sympathisers in

[1] To show the influence that Fenianism had gained in the country the case of the Tipperary election of November 1869 may be cited. The Liberal candidate was Mr. Heron, a popular Catholic barrister. The Fenians suddenly started in opposition a Fenian convict, O'Donovan Rossa, who was actually undergoing his term of penal servitude. Of course he was an impossible candidate, and everyone knew it. But he was started as a protest against Whiggery, to rally the Fenians. He was elected, to the amazement of the loyalists, by 1,311 votes to 1,028. Of course the election was declared void, and in January 1870 a new election took place. Mr. Heron stood again. There was a difference of opinion now among the Fenians. Some said enough had been done for honour in Rossa's candidature. Others said 'No'; and these latter put up Kickham, who had just been liberated on account of serious illness. However, Kickham declared he would never enter the English Parliament. Nevertheless, the Fenians demanded a poll, with the result—Heron, 1,668; Kickham, 1,664.

1870 who would not touch us at all in 1865. In fact, we had a stronger hold on the country after the rising than we had before. We were anxious to follow the new movement carefully. Even at that date the idea of the "new departure" had occurred to some of us. We felt that we might have a long time to wait before we could put 20,000 or 30,000 men into the field to fight England; but we thought that by taking part in every political or semi-political movement that was going on we could exercise much influence, and mould these movements to our own ends. An Irish Parliament was certainly the next best thing to absolute separation, and many of us would be quite content to close the account with England on the basis of legislative independence. But then we had to see that this Parliament would not be a sham. If the Home Rule movement were a genuine affair, we would help it all we could. But we had to take care it should be genuine; we had to take care that there should be no backsliding on the part of the Parliamentarians. So I went to watch and report. I gave the name of James Martin, and I was greatly amused afterwards to find myself figuring in A. M. Sullivan's book as "James Martin," J.P., ex-High Sheriff. I believe Martin, who is an old Catholic Whig, was very indignant at finding his name in such doubtful company. What would he have said if he had known that it had been used as a blind by a Fenian centre?'[1]

The first resolution of the meeting—carried by acclamation—was:

'That it is the opinion of this meeting that the true remedy for the evils of Ireland is the establish-

[1] Before the meeting at the Bilton Hotel 'Mr. Martin' met Butt at the lodgings of another Fenian, when an understanding was arrived at

ment of an Irish Parliament with full control over our domestic affairs.'

The objects of the new association were then defined specifically thus:

I.—This association is formed for the purpose of obtaining for Ireland the right of self-government by means of a National Parliament.

II.—It is hereby declared, as the essential principle of this association, that the objects, and THE ONLY OBJECTS, contemplated by its organisation are:

To obtain for our country the right and privilege of managing our own affairs, by a Parliament assembled in Ireland, composed of her Majesty the Sovereign, and her successors, and the Lords and Commons of Ireland;

To secure for that Parliament, under a federal arrangement, the right of legislating for and regulating all matters relating to the internal affairs of Ireland, and control over Irish resources and revenues, subject to the obligation of contributing our just proportion of the Imperial expenditure;

To leave to an Imperial Parliament the power of dealing with all questions affecting the Imperial Crown and Government, legislation regarding the Colonies and other dependencies of the Crown, the relations of the United Empire with foreign States, and all matters appertaining to the defence and the stability of the empire at large;

To attain such an adjustment of the relations between the two countries, without any interference with the prerogatives of the Crown, or any disturbance of the principles of the constitution.

III.—The association invites the co-operation of all Irishmen who are willing to join in seeking for Ireland a federal arrangement based upon these general principles.

IV.—The association will endeavour to forward the object it has in view, by using all legitimate means of influencing public sentiment, both in Ireland and Great Britain, by taking all opportunities of instructing and informing public opinion, and by seeking to unite Irishmen of all creeds and classes in one nationa

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that the Fenians would at least assume an attitude of benevolent neutrality towards the 'open movement.'

movement, in support of the great national object hereby contemplated.

V.—It is declared to be an essential principle of the association that, while every member is understood by joining it to concur in its general object and plan of action, no person so joining is committed to any political opinion, except the advisability of seeking for Ireland the amount of self-government contemplated in the objects of the association.

Thus was the Home Rule movement launched. The words 'Home Rule' were the invention of Butt. He thought the old cry of 'Repeal' would frighten the English; but that the phrase 'Home Rule' would commend itself to everyone as reasonable and innocent.

The new movement was opposed by the orthodox Liberals and the orthodox Tories; by the 'Freeman's Journal,' the most powerful newspaper in the country; and, more important than all, by the Catholic Church. But it nevertheless grew and prospered. In 1871 came the first trial of strength. There were four by-elections—Meath, West Meath, Galway (city), and Limerick (city). Home Rulers were returned for all: John Martin for Meath, P. J. Smyth for West Meath, Mitchell-Henry for Galway, and Butt himself for Limerick. In 1872 there were two more important by-elections, Kerry and Galway (county). Home Rulers were once more put forward for both, and were returned—Mr. Blennerhassett for Kerry, and Colonel Nolan for Galway.

Great preparations were now made for the General Election, which it was felt would soon come. In November 1873 a Home Rule Conference was held in Dublin; the name of the organisation was changed from the 'Home Government Association' to the 'Home Rule League.' The 'Freeman's Journal' and the Church gave in their adhesion to the movement;

and further resolutions were passed defining the object of the society. It was declared, among other things:

'That as the basis of the proceedings of this conference we declare our conviction that it is essentially necessary to the peace and prosperity of Ireland that the right of domestic legislation on all Irish affairs should be restored to our country.

'That in accordance with all ancient and constitutional rights of the Irish nation we claim the privilege of managing our own affairs by a Parliament assembled in Ireland, composed of the Sovereign, the Lords, and the Commons of Ireland.

'That in claiming these rights and privileges for our country we adopt the principle of federal arrangement which would secure to the Irish Parliament the right of legislating for and regulating all matters relating to the internal affairs of Ireland; while leaving the Imperial Parliament the power of dealing with all questions affecting the Imperial Crown and Government, legislation regarding the Colonies and other dependencies of the Crown, the relations of the empire with foreign States, and all matters appertaining to the defence and stability of the empire at large, as well as the power of granting and providing the supplies necessary for Imperial purposes.

'That such an arrangement does not involve any change in the existing constitution of Imperial Parliament, or any interference with the prerogatives of the Crown, or disturbance of the principles of the constitution.

'That to secure to the Irish people the advantages of constitutional government it is essential that there should be in Ireland an Administration of Irish affairs, controlled according to constitutional principles by the

Irish Parliament and conducted by the Ministers constitutionally responsible to that Parliament.'

In February 1874 the General Election came like a bolt from the blue. The Home Rulers were taken by surprise, but they rallied vigorously, and, to the astonishment of everyone, carried over fifty-nine seats all told.

Four Fenians were subsequently returned.

The return of these Fenians was not pleasing to the leaders of the I. R. B., who believed that an oath of allegiance to the Queen (which every member of Parliament was bound to take) was inconsistent with the oath of allegiance to the Irish republic (which all those men had taken); but some of the rank and file were not troubled by scruples about the double oath. The Fenian members were, however, all ultimately expelled from the organisation by the chief executive authority.

The General Election of 1874 was, then, a great Home Rule victory. While it was pending Parnell resolved to enter public life.

CHAPTER IV

PUBLIC LIFE

One night during the General Election of 1874 Parnell dined with his sister, Mrs. Dickinson, in Dublin. After dinner Captain Dickinson said: 'Well, Charles, why don't you go into Parliament? Why don't you stand for your native county?' To the surprise of everyone at the table, Parnell said quickly: 'I will. Whom ought I to see?' 'Oh!' said Dickinson, 'we will see about that to-morrow. The great thing is you have decided to stand.' 'I will see about it at once,' said Parnell. 'I have made up my mind, and I won't wait. Whom ought I to see?' 'I think Gray, of the "Freeman's Journal,"' said John, who was also present. 'Very well,' said Parnell, rising from the table, 'I shall go to him at once. Do you come with me, John.' The two brothers then went away together. It was now eleven o'clock, and they found Gray at the 'Freeman's' office. He was amazed when Parnell entered and said: 'I have come to say, Mr. Gray, that I mean to stand for Wicklow as a Home Ruler.' Gray was much pleased with the intelligence, and he and the two Parnells sat down to consider the situation. 'You know,' said Parnell, 'I am High Sheriff of the county, but then I can be relieved from the office by the Lord Lieutenant.' 'Then,' answered Gray, 'the

first thing to do is to see the Lord Lieutenant. See him in the morning, and if he releases you start at once for Wicklow, and the Home Rule League will send you all the help they can. We have already a candidate in the field, Mr. O'Byrne.' Next day Parnell and John went to Dublin Castle and saw the Lord Lieutenant. But his Excellency would not relieve Parnell from his duty as Sheriff. 'Very well,' said Parnell, as he and John walked away from the Castle, 'but we shall not be baulked. You shall stand, John. We shall start for Rathdrum this evening, and begin the campaign at once.' Having advised the Home Rule League of their intentions, they proceeded that evening to Rathdrum. The news of John's candidature had travelled before them, and a crowd was collected at the village to give them a hearty reception. 'Charlie,' says John, 'mounted a cart or a barrel and made a speech. He was not much of a speaker then, but he said things which caught on. I was rather surprised at his trying to speak at all. But he knew what to say, though he said little, and they cheered him. It struck me at the time that what he said was rather wild, and on the way to Avondale I said to him: "You know you ought not to make speeches, you ought not to interfere at all. You will get into trouble." "What can they do to me?" he asked. "Turn you out of the office of Sheriff, for one thing," I replied. "What I want," said he, smiling. However, he finally agreed not to interfere again, and to act properly as Sheriff, and this he did. Well, the election came off, and I was left at the bottom of the poll.'[1]

But the Wicklow election was practically the

[1] Mr. O. Byrne (H.R.) and Mr. Dick (Liberal) were elected.

beginning of Parnell's public career. He was now bent on plunging headlong into politics at the first opportunity.

The opportunity soon came. Colonel Taylor, one of the members for Dublin County, had become Chancellor of the Duchy in Mr. Disraeli's Ministry, and had to seek re-election on his appointment to office. The Home Rule League, of which Parnell was now a member, resolved to contest the seat. It would, they knew, be a hopeless battle. Still they felt that the contest would rally the Home Rulers of the county, and be an incentive to action as well as a test of strength. But who would enter the list for this desperate conflict? A strong candidate, a candidate of means, was essential. Parnell offered to jump into the breach. But his offer was not quite regarded with satisfaction. He was a landlord and a Protestant, and he came of a good old stock; in addition, he would be able to pay his own election expenses. These things were in his favour. But would he in other respects make a good candidate? Personally he was hardly known to the council of the League. A few Home Rulers had, indeed, met him. But they had formed an unfavourable opinion of him. He was at this time a tall, thin, handsome, delicate, young fellow; very diffident, very reticent, utterly ignorant of political affairs, and apparently without any political faculty. His whole stock of information about Ireland was limited to the history of the Manchester martyrs. He could talk of them, but he could not talk of anything else. Still, it must be allowed that even this limited knowledge helped him. 'Did Parnell,' I asked one who was familiar with Irish politics, 'ever meet any Fenians about this time?' 'Yes,' was the answer, 'I some-

times saw him with ——. They used to talk about the amnesty movement, so far as Parnell ever talked at all, but he was a better listener than a talker. He knew nothing about Home Rule, but he was interested in Fenianism. For that matter,' my friend added, 'so was Butt. Butt often said to me at the beginning of the movement that the Fenians were the best men in Irish politics.' Fenianism and Home Rule were certainly a good deal mixed up; and at a dinner party at Butt's, when the question of the Wicklow candidature was practically decided, —— was present and supported Parnell, though a leading Constitutional-Nationalist said 'he would never do.' Butt himself was favourable to Parnell.

One morning about this time I called on Butt at his residence in Henrietta Street, Dublin. He came into the library in his usual genial radiant way, looking well pleased and in excellent humour. Without any formal words he rushed up to me and said: 'My dear boy, we have got a splendid recruit, an historic name, my friend, young Parnell, of Wicklow; and unless I am mistaken, the Saxon will find him an ugly customer, though he is a good-looking fellow.' But the council of the Home Rule League had yet to pronounce judgment. When the question came formally before them there was much misgiving. 'Will he go straight?' one of the members asked. 'If he gives his word,' said the '48 veteran, John Martin, 'I will trust him. I would trust any of the Parnells.' 'Still,' says Mr. A. M. Sullivan, who was present, 'there was hesitancy, and eventually we said, "Let us see him." The general council adjourned for the purpose, and on re-assembling I saw Mr. C. S. Parnell for the first time. I do not wish to pretend that I possessed any marvellous

power of divination, but when the young neophyte had retired I not only joined John Martin in espousing his cause, but undertook to move his adoption at a public meeting which it was decided to hold in the Rotunda.'

At this public meeting Parnell made his *début*. Mr. Sullivan describes the scene. 'The resolution which I had moved in his favour having been adopted with acclamation, he came forward to address the assemblage. To our dismay, he broke down utterly. He faltered, he paused, went on, got confused, and, pale with intense but subdued nervous anxiety, caused everyone to feel deep sympathy for him. The audience saw it all, and cheered him kindly and heartily; but many on the platform shook their heads, sagely prophesying that if ever he got to Westminster, no matter how long he stayed there, he would either be a "silent member" or be known as "single-speech Parnell."' 'What was thought of Parnell at that time,' I asked another prominent Nationalist. 'Well,' he answered, 'we thought him a nice gentlemanly fellow who would be an ornament but no use.' 'I first met Parnell,' said Mr. T. W. Russell, 'in 1874, when he was standing for Dublin. I was then struck by what I thought his extraordinary political ignorance and incapacity. He knew nothing, and I thought he would never do anything. I interviewed him on behalf of the Temperance people. He promised to vote for the Sunday Closing Bill, and he kept his word. I found him very straight in what I had to do with him.'

'I met Parnell,' says Mr. O'Connor Power, 'in 1874, the time of the Dublin election. He seemed to me a nice gentlemanly fellow, but he was hopelessly ignorant, and seemed to me to have no political capacity

whatever. He could not speak at all. He was hardly able to get up and say, "Gentlemen, I am a candidate for the representation of the county of Dublin." We all listened to him with pain while he was on his legs, and felt immensely relieved when he sat down. No one ever thought he would cut a figure in politics. We thought he would be a respectable mediocrity.' So much for early promises.

On March 7 Parnell issued his address to the electors of the county of Dublin, and on March 9 the parish priest of Rathdrum wrote supporting his candidature, saying: 'His coolness, sound judgment, great prudence and moderation, as well as capacity as a practical man, will be a great acquisition to the National Party should he be returned for the county of Dublin.'

A few days later the Tories circulated a report that Parnell had treated some of his tenants with harshness.

'It has been sought,' Parnell said in a public letter dealing with the matter, 'to connect me with some difference between Mr. Henry Parnell and his tenants. In reply to this transparent electioneering trick, I in the most emphatic manner publicly declare that I was in no way, directly or indirectly, connected with or mixed up in any manner with the said dispute, nor could I in any way control or influence the matter.'

As John had been left at the bottom of the poll in the Wicklow election, so Charles was left at the bottom of the poll in the Dublin.[1]

[1] Parnell received 300*l.* from the Home Rule League to contest this election. When the election was over he handed back the 300*l.* to the League. The contest cost him 2,000*l.*

'I well remember,' said one of the retainers of the Parnell family at Avondale, 'the day Master Charlie came home when he was beaten at the Dublin election. He walked up here, looking so handsome and grand and devil-may-care. "Well, boys," he said, "I am beaten, but they are not done with me yet." The driver, sir, who brought him home said to us afterwards, "That's a regular devil. He talked all the way about fighting again and smashing them all, and he looked wild and fierce." And, sir, Master Charles was a regular devil when his blood was up, and no mistake.'

Parnell now resumed once more his quiet life at Avondale, attending to his mines, his sawmills, and his other country avocations, and so he remained for a twelvemonth. Then an event occurred which drew him from his retreat.

John Mitchell returned to Ireland. He had been sentenced to fourteen years' transportation in 1848 for treason-felony. In 1850 he escaped from Tasmania, and fled to the United States. There he remained for twenty-four years. Just about the time of his arrival in Ireland in February 1875 a vacancy occurred in the representation of Tipperary. The Nationalists resolved to nominate Mitchell, and he was elected without opposition. The House of Commons quashed the return on the ground that Mitchell was a felon who had neither received a free pardon nor purged his crime by serving the term of his imprisonment. A new writ was accordingly issued in March 1875. But the Nationalists resolved to defy the House of Commons, and to nominate Mitchell again. In this crisis Parnell reappeared.

Writing to the 'Freeman's Journal,' and inclosing

a cheque for 25*l.* towards Mitchell's expenses, he said he hoped that Mitchell would again be returned for Tipperary, and that the 'party vote of the House of Commons' would be thus 'reversed,' adding, 'Let the legal question be fought out calmly and fairly afterwards.'

The second Tipperary election took place on March 11. Mitchell was opposed by a Tory, but was returned by an overwhelming majority. He, however, never took his seat. A few days afterwards he fell seriously ill, and died in his native town, Newry, on March 20. Nine days later his old friend and comrade, John Martin, passed away, and a vacancy was thus created in the representation of County Meath. Parnell, who was now a member of the council of the Home Rule League, was put up by the Nationalists.

A short time prior to the election Sir Gavan Duffy arrived in Europe from Victoria. He had scarcely landed at Brindisi when he received the following telegram from an old friend, Father Peter O'Reilly:

'John Martin dead, telegraph will you stand for Meath. At a conference in Kells on Monday twenty-four priests present, much enthusiasm, the bishop not disapproving. Come home, success certain.'

This telegram was followed by another, purporting to be signed by William Dillon, the son of John Blake Dillon, one of Duffy's colleagues in the '48 movement:

'John Martin dead. Parnell, candidate of Home Rule League, would probably retire if you join League and stand. Wire reply. Wm. Dillon, 15 Nassau Street, Dublin.'

This telegram was a forgery. It was never signed by Mr. William Dillon, nor in any way authorised by him. But Sir Gavan Duffy naturally believed it to be genuine, and sent the following reply:

'Thanks. I do not seek a constituency, but I am a repealer, as I have been all my life, and if Meath elect me I will do my best in concert with the Irish members to serve the Irish cause. Should the constituency be dissatisfied with me at any time I will resign. But if it be made a condition that I shall join the League and adopt its novel formula instead of the principles held by me in common with O'Connell, O'Brien, Davis, Dillon, Dr. Maginn, Meagher, and all the Nationalists in my time, that I cannot do.'

This telegram was read immediately to the Home Rule League. A rumour was spread that Duffy meant to repudiate the League, and to destroy it; and in order to avoid a split in the Nationalist ranks, his friends in Meath did not press his candidature.

Parnell, however, was opposed by a Tory and by an Independent Home Ruler. But in April 1875 he was placed at the head of the poll, amid a storm of popular enthusiasm. 'There was tremendous rejoicing in Royal Meath,' says a contemporary writer, 'over the victory. Enthusiastic crowds assembled in thousands to give vent to a common feeling of delight. Bonfires blazed in many quarters; and the populace of Trim, in which town the declaration of the poll had been made, having discovered Mr. Parnell walking down from the parochial house to his hotel, laid lovingly violent hands on him, carried him in triumph round their own special bonfire in the Market Square, and

finally set him standing on a cask,' where he said a few words of thanks for his return and of congratulation for the Nationalist victory. The hour of the future leader had at length come.[1]

[1] Sir Gavan Duffy objected to Butt's Home Rule plan as a retreat from the historical position taken up by O'Connell and the Young Irelanders, and complained that the policy of independent opposition, initiated by him and the Tenant Right Leaguers of 1852, was not carried out. 'I strove,' says Sir Gavan Duffy, 'to familiarise the people with the policy by which alone the cause might be carried to success—the policy of independent opposition; a policy which meant union with no English party, and hostility to none which was prepared to advance our cause.'—*North and South.*

CHAPTER V

IN PARLIAMENT

PARNELL took his seat in the House of Commons on April 22, 1875. He was introduced by Captain Nolan, member for Galway, and Mr. Ennis, senior member for Meath.

There were at this time, as we have seen, fifty-nine Home Rulers. The parliamentary attitude of the great majority of these may be described as active rather than aggressive. Butt himself was a model of courtesy and moderation. He tried rather to win English sympathy than force English opinion. He addressed the House as he would address a jury. He sought to persuade, conciliate, humour, never saying or doing aught to shock the susceptibilities of his audience. He argued, he appealed, he based his case on facts and reason, he relied on the justice and fairness of England. He respected English sentiment, and hoped by moderation and friendliness to remove English prejudice. He scrupulously observed parliamentary forms, and conscientiously kept the law of the land. He was, indeed, a perfect type of the constitutional agitator, seeking by legal methods to change the law, but doing no violence to it. 'The House of Commons,' said the late Mr. Henry Richards, 'is like the kingdom of Heaven in one respect, though it is

very unlike it in other respects; but it is like it in this, it suffereth violence and the violent take it by force.' These, however, were not the views of Isaac Butt. 'I am not,' he once said, 'in favour of a policy of exasperation.' The House cheered the sentiment; and for the rest treated Butt with gentle contempt. There was at this time a member of the Irish party who did not sympathise with the tactics of his leader. He believed in a policy of blood and iron. 'All nonsense, sir,' he would say, 'the way Butt goes on. He thinks he will get something out of the English by rubbing them down. Nonsense; rub them up, sir, that's the thing to do; rub them up. Make them uncomfortable. That's the right policy.' This amiable individual was Joseph Gillis Biggar.

Biggar was a wealthy Ulster merchant and a member of the supreme council of the I. R. B. He came to the British Parliament practically to see how much mischief he could do to the British Empire. He had no respect for the House of Commons; he had no respect for any English institution. Of course he had no oratorical faculty, no literary gifts; indeed, he could hardly speak three consecutive sentences. He had little political knowledge, he despised books and the readers of books; but he was shrewd and businesslike, without manners and without fear. He regarded parliamentary rules as all 'rot,' delighted in shocking the House, and gloried in causing general confusion. He had but two ideas—to rasp the House of Commons, and make himself thoroughly hated by the British public. It must be confessed that in these respects he succeeded to his heart's content.

Curiously enough, the very day on which Parnell took his seat Biggar made his first formidable essay in

parliamentary debate. A Coercion Bill was under consideration. It had just reached the committee stage. Biggar rose to move an amendment. It would be absurd to say that he made a speech. But he was on his feet for four hours by the clock.

'We shall not,' wrote the 'Times,' in commenting on this performance, 'attempt to inflict on our readers a *réchauffé* of Mr. Biggar's address, and as it was, indeed, to a large extent inaudible, it must be lost to the world, unless it be printed in some Dublin newspaper.'

But Biggar's speech is not 'lost to the world.' It is enshrined in the pages of 'Hansard' to the extent of seven columns, and has gained a good deal—as many another address has gained—at the hands of a friendly reporter. But as a matter of fact the oration was mainly inaudible and wholly irrelevant.

Drawing at the start upon his internal resources, but finding that they did not carry him very far, the member for Cavan literally took away the breath of the House by plunging into Blue Books, newspapers, and strewing *disjecta membra* over his discourse. There is much unconscious humour in 'Hansard's' account of this part of the performance:

'The hon. member then read, in a manner which made it impossible to follow the application, long extracts from reports and evidence of the West Meath Commission, and from the Catholic newspapers of Ireland, and from statements and resolutions of various public bodies and meetings. The general purport appeared to be to denounce the necessity for any exceptional legislation in regard to Ireland, to assert the general tranquillity and good order of the country,

and the absence of Ribbonism, and to protest against the invasion of the liberties of the people.'

Having inflicted these documents on the House until the assembly groaned under their weight, Biggar once more varied the entertainment by falling back on original resources, jerking out a number of incoherent and irrelevant sentences, but still keeping on the even tenor of his way with imperturbable calmness and resolution. The more the House groaned, the more delighted was the orator. He was sparing, however, of original matter, and soon took refuge in literature again. This time, to show the variety of his knowledge, he abandoned the Blue Books and the public Press, and gave the House a touch of the 'statutes at large.'

'The hon. member,' says the dignified 'Hansard,' 'who was almost inaudible, was understood to recapitulate some of the arbitrary enactments of older statutes, and to point out that they were in substance or effect re-enacted in the various Arms Acts and Peace Preservation Acts of the present reign.'

Having completely overwhelmed the House with this legal lore, Biggar again dropped into a lighter vein, and treated his listeners once more to some original observations. The House was now almost empty; and an hon. member called attention to the fact that 'forty members were not present.' Biggar immediately resumed his seat, beaming benevolently —for be it known that Biggar was one of the most benevolent-looking men in the House, and his face was almost one perpetual smile—and observing to an Irish member by his side, 'I am not half done yet.' The House soon filled, and Biggar again rose. He had now come absolutely to an end of all original ideas; he had exhausted his knowledge of the statutes, but

the Blue Books were still before him. 'The hon. member,' says 'Hansard,' with delightful gravity, 'proceeded to read extracts from the evidence before the West Meath Commission—as was understood—but in a manner which rendered him totally unintelligible.' The Speaker at length interposed, saying that the rules of the House required that an hon. member should address himself to the Chair, and that this rule the hon. member was at present neglecting. This was the crisis; but Biggar was equal to it. He expressed great regret that he had not observed the rule in question, but said the fact was that feeling fatigued after speaking so long, and being so far away from the Chair, he could not make himself heard. This state of things, however, could be easily remedied, and he would, therefore, with the permission of the House, take up a more favourable position. Accordingly, leaving his place behind the gangway, he marched right up to the Treasury Bench, taking with him Blue Books, Acts of Parliament, newspapers, and in fact a perfect library of materials, from which, to quote once more the decorous 'Hansard,' 'he continued to read long extracts with comments.' But the longest day must have an end, and even Biggar at length released the House from bondage, and sank complacently into the nearest seat.

'If Mr. Biggar,' said the 'Times,' 'had devoted but one hour out of his four to the resolution upon which he was nominally speaking, he might have said something effective.' But it was not Biggar's intention to say anything effective. He wanted to do something offensive, and he did. He proved that one member could stop the business of the House for four hours, and make its proceedings absolutely ridiculous. The

lesson was not lost on Parnell, who sat calmly by and watched the performance with interest and amusement. Four days later he himself took part in the discussion, and made his maiden speech. It was short, modest, spoken in a thin voice and with manifest nervousness. However, he got out what he wanted to say, and what he said, briefly and even spasmodically, was the kernel of the whole matter. 'I trust,' he said, 'that England will give to Irishmen the right which they claim—the right of self-government. Why should Ireland be treated as a geographical fragment of England, as I heard an ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer call her some time ago? Ireland is not a geographical fragment. She is a nation.'

The year 1875 passed quietly away in Parliament and in Ireland. Parnell remained chiefly a calm spectator of the proceedings of the House of Commons, watching, learning, biding his time. He was ignorant of public affairs, and he read no books. But he was not ashamed to ask for information, and to pick up knowledge in that way. 'How do you get materials,' he asked one of the Irish members, 'for questioning the Ministers?' 'Why,' said his friend, smiling at the simplicity of the novice, 'from the newspapers, from our constituents, from many sources.' 'Ah,' said Parnell, 'I must try and ask a question myself some day.'

With his eminently practical turn of mind he soon saw that it was absolutely necessary, for the purpose of parliamentary warfare, to obtain a complete mastery of the rules of debate. But he did not, as some suppose, read up the subject laboriously. He never did anything laboriously. What he knew, he knew intuitively, or learned by some easy method of his own devising. Books he avoided. 'How am I to learn

the rules of the House?' a young Irish member asked him in after years. 'By breaking them,' was the answer. 'That's what I did.' It was true enough. Parnell learned the rules of debate by breaking them himself, or by seeing others break them. But he was very quiet, very unobtrusive, very diffident, during the session of 1875. He came, he saw, and was for the time content. He did not, however, altogether remain a silent member. He asked some questions; he made some speeches, short, sharp, and to the point.

Before the session closed he had formed his own views of the House of Commons and of the position of Irishmen in it; and he gave expression to these views during the recess in two brief and pithy sentences. Speaking at Navan on October 7, he said: 'We do not want speakers in the House of Commons, but men who will vote right.' Ten days later he said, at a meeting at Nobber: 'The Irish people should watch the conduct of their representatives in the House of Commons.' These sentences summed up the Parnell gospel: a vigilant public opinion outside, and practical rather than talking members inside Parliament. From the beginning to the end Parnell disliked speechifying. The process was absolutely painful to him. Talking was sometimes necessary to get things done (or to prevent their being done), and he was forced to put up with it. But he took no pleasure in oratory, and had not the least ambition to become a great public speaker. The only occasion on which he made or listened to speeches with any degree of satisfaction was when talking obstructed the business of the House. Biggar was, perhaps, his ideal of a useful public speaker—a man who was silent when business had to be done, but

who could hold the floor for four hours at a stretch when business had to be prevented.

Parnell from the outset seems to have thought that the atmosphere of the House of Commons was fatal to Irish activity, and that a healthy and vigorous public opinion in the country was absolutely necessary to save the Irish representation from inertia and collapse. He did nothing during the session of 1875 which fixed the public attention on him; but it is abundantly clear that even then he had resolved on his line, and that he only waited the opportunity to take it. His faith was not in mere Parliamentarians, but in forces outside, stronger than Parliamentarianism, which he determined to influence, and by whose help he hoped to dominate the parliamentary army. From the moment he first thought seriously of politics he saw, as if by instinct, that Fenianism was the key of Irish Nationality; and if he could or would not have the key in his hand, he was certainly resolved never to let it out of his sight. We shall therefore see him as the years roll by standing on the verge of treason-felony, but with marvellous dexterity always preventing himself from slipping over. Perhaps this was the secret of his power. But the year 1875 ended without that power being revealed, or, indeed, even dreamt of. No one saw into the future. On the surface Ireland was tranquil; there seemed no signs of coming storm in any part of the political horizon; all was apparently quiet, peaceful, prosperous. The Dublin correspondent of the 'Times' summed up the situation thus: 'The present circumstances of Ireland may be briefly summed up in the statement that at no period of her history did she appear more tranquil, more free from serious crime, more prosperous and contented. But few of the dis-

quieting elements of former times are now at work. Political excitement has all but died out with Mitchell and Martin, whose last effort to revive it exhausted its impotent fury. There is no longer the agitation which convulsed the country in days gone by. Home Rule still keeps a little cauldron simmering, but there is no fear that it will ever become formidable; for, though there is no want of a Hecate to practise the old spells, they have lost their power over the people. An organised attempt is made to fan into a general flame the dissatisfaction which is felt in some parts of the country with the working of the Land Act; but its success has hitherto been slight, and confined to certain localities. The relations between landlord and tenant continue to be generally friendly, and both parties are, with some remarkable exceptions, adapting themselves with prudence and good feeling to the change consequent upon the application of a new law. In the north a determined struggle is made to obtain a larger concession of tenant-right than the Act has given, and in the other provinces corresponding advantages are sought; but the tenants whom it is sought to arouse and combine in general action are giving but a faint response to the call of their leaders. The truth is that it is by no means so easy as it was formerly to make them discontented, and they are unwilling to be drawn away from more profitable pursuits to engage in an agitation which offers but little chance of success.'

These were strange words, written on the eve of a great convulsion.

CHAPTER VI

GATHERING CLOUDS

It is unnecessary to say that the opening of the year 1876 found all England united against the Irish Nationalist demand. The Tories were in power. Mr. Disraeli was Prime Minister, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach was Chief Secretary for Ireland.

Mr. Gladstone had retired from the leadership of the Liberal party, and Lord Hartington had taken his place. Differing on almost all other points, Liberals and Tories were united in their hostility to Home Rule. The fact that nearly sixty Irish members had been returned pledged to the question made no impression on the House of Commons. The great majority of these members were moderate, respectable men, anxious to conciliate English opinion, careful not to wound English sentiment. I have said that Butt was a perfect type of a constitutional agitator. The Irish party was a perfect type of a constitutional party. But it was laughed at and despised by the House of Commons. Home Rule was regarded as a supreme joke; the Home Rulers were looked upon as a collection of foolish but harmless 'gentlemen from Ireland.' Biggar alone stood out in bold relief from the whole *crowd*, and his efforts to seize every opportunity for outraging English opinion not only made him hateful to the

English members, but even brought him under the displeasure of the majority of his own party.

'Whigs, sir, Whigs, every one of them,' he said, speaking of his colleagues in moments of relaxation. No Irish Nationalist, be it said, can apply a more opprobrious epithet to another than to call him a Whig. To call him a Tory would be almost praise in comparison. In Ireland the Tory is regarded as an open enemy; the Whig as a treacherous friend. It is the Whigs, not the Tories, who have habitually sapped the integrity of the Irish representation. So at least the Irish think, and in 1876 there was a growing suspicion in the country that the Irish party was gliding into Whiggery. Indeed, the Irish members themselves used sometimes to twit each other on the subject. 'You know you are a Whig,' I heard one Irish member say to another in the lobby in 1876. 'To be sure I am,' said S., 'and you are a Whig, and your father was a Whig, and Butt is a Whig, and Sullivan is a Whig, and Mitchell Henry is a Whig—we are all Whigs.' Poor S. was naked but not ashamed; he had indeed been the most orthodox of Whigs all his life, until 1874, when the flowing tide swept him into Home Rule. The Irish parliamentary party was not, however, as a whole a party of Whigs. There were no doubt Whigs in its ranks, men who had been forced by their constituents to take the Home Rule pledge, but who did not believe in it. The majority of the party, however, were true Nationalists, albeit sincerely constitutional agitators. 'We shall fight England,' one of them said, 'not with bullets, but with ballot-boxes'; and this was practically the creed of the whole body. They believed that the House of Commons could be convinced by reason and moderation, that the battle

could be fought within the lines of the constitution and in accordance with the usages which obtain in a society of gentlemen. 'I think,' said one of them, animadverting on Biggar's activity, 'that a man should be a gentleman first and a patriot afterwards,' and the sentiment was cheered by Irish members. They did not think that the House of Commons would 'suffer violence,' and they certainly had not the most remote notion of 'taking it by force.' If a body of Irishmen bent on constitutional agitation pure and simple, eager to cultivate friendly relations with Englishmen, and desirous of treating opponents with the courtesy and respect which they expected for themselves, could have made way in the English Parliament, then the followers of Butt ought to have succeeded. But they did not succeed. They made no way whatever. They not only failed in pushing Home Rule to the front, but they failed in pushing any Irish question to the front, though their attention was given to every Irish question. They were voted down by 'brutal majorities' or out-manœuvred by skilful parliamentary tacticians, and thus their efforts were unavailing.

On the opening of the Session of 1876 the Irish members mustered in full strength, and notices were given of a goodly array of Bills. The Land question and Education question were taken in hand. Measures were announced for dealing with the subjects of Union Rating, Electoral County Boards, Deep-sea Fishing, Reclamation of Waste Lands, Grand Jury Reform, Municipal Reform, Parliamentary Reform. But none of the Irish Bills found their way to the Statute Book.

Butt's Land Bill, a very moderate measure indeed compared with recent enactments, was rejected by an

overwhelming majority, 290 to 56 votes.[1] The House of Commons considered that the Land question had been settled in 1870, and that it was simply an impertinence to revive it. The Irish were not to have a Parliament of their own, and the English Parliament did not think it worth while to consider seriously an Irish demand which went to the very root of the well-being of the people. Such was the sagacious attitude of British statesmanship towards Ireland in the year 1876.

Biggar, be it said, 'thoroughly disapproved of the tactics of the Irish parliamentary party. He looked on the introduction of all these Bills as "mere moonshine."' 'What's the good?' he would say. 'We can't get them through, we know we can't get them through. The English stop our Bills. Why don't we stop their Bills? That's the thing to do. No Irish Bills; but stop English Bills. No legislation; that's the policy, sir, that's the policy. Butt's a fool, too

[1] The Land Act of 1870, it may be said, provided that tenants should, on eviction, receive compensation for improvements, and in certain cases for disturbance. That Act had not worked well, and Butt now proposed to amend it. 'I propose,' he said, in introducing his Bill, 'that every tenant shall have permission to claim from the chairman of his county the benefit of his improvements, and if he does that I propose that a certificate shall be given him protecting him against eviction by his landlord. That will in point of time establish a perpetuity of tenure. The great difficulty in anything of this kind is to get a tribunal which will fairly value the land. I confess that it is a difficulty which I have found very hard to meet. This idea of a valued rent seems to be getting largely hold of some of the landlords, and I see that some of them suggest the valuation should be fixed by a Government valuer. There are, I admit, some attractions in that proposal. Another suggestion is that the appointment of the arbitrators should be vested in three Privy Councillors, and some time ago I proposed that the judges of assize should appoint them. It is, however, the most difficult thing in the world to find a tribunal to which you can entrust this task. I therefore propose, by this Bill, that the landlord and tenant should each select one arbitrator, and the two arbitrators thus appointed shall agree on a third. In cases where the landlord should not appear I suggest that the rent should be assessed by a jury, composed of three special and three common jurors.'

gentlemanly; we're all too gentlemanly.' There was at this time an Irish member who shared Biggar's views, or perhaps it might be more accurate to say that Biggar shared his views. Any way they thought alike on the subject of parliamentary tactics. This member was Joseph Ronayne.

Ronayne had been a Young Irelander, and had sat for the city of Cork since 1872. He was a shrewd, business-like man, of quiet and retiring manners. Unwilling to take a prominent part in debate, he was helpful and earnest in council, always advising energetic action, but, as he would say, too old—he was only fifty-four—to put his views into practice. After three years' experience in the House of Commons he came to the conclusion that Irish business could never be done by the adoption of Butt's conciliatory tactics. 'We will never,' he urged in 1874, 'make any impression on the House until we interfere in English business. At present Englishmen manage their own affairs in their own way without any interference from us. Then, when we want to get our business through, they stop us. We ought to show them that two can play at this game of obstruction. Let us interfere in English legislation; let us show them that if we are not strong enough to get our own work done, we are strong enough to prevent them from getting theirs.'

But, with a single exception, the Irish party were at this time unwilling to take Ronayne's advice. Butt would not listen to it. He thought such tactics would be undignified, useless, mischievous. Ronayne did not press the point, but he would say to the younger men of the party: 'Well, it is for you to do the work. I am too old. But Englishmen will never pay attention to you until you make yourselves a nuisance to them.'

'Ronayne is quite right,' Biggar would say. 'We'll never do any good until we take an intelligent interest in English affairs.' As Biggar preached, so he practised to the best of his abilities.

Parnell had heard of Ronayne's advice. He had seen Biggar at work. He knew that Butt objected to obstruction. But, without a moment's hesitation, he backed Ronayne's words and Biggar's deeds. It was one of the characteristics of this remarkable man that he never seemed to be taken unawares. If you suggested what you conceived to be a new idea, you found that apparently it was an old idea with him. 'Yes,' he would say to you, as you came up brimful of brilliant thoughts, 'I have thought that over.' This would, perhaps, have been unpleasant coming from another man, as it would in a sense take away the credit of the initiative from you—and we are all very vain—but it was never unpleasant coming from Parnell. After talking the matter over with him, he sent you away with the two-fold feeling: (1) that it was impossible to anticipate him in anything; (2) that you had done good service in bringing the subject under his notice, as the result might be to quicken his thoughts into action. He never wearied of impressing men with a sense of their usefulness, though you never spoke to him without feeling his absolute superiority as a political leader. The one idea which above all others he fixed in the minds of those who had intercourse with him was that he could lead them, and that they could not lead him.

When the subject of obstruction was brought before him, he was ready for it, and went briskly into action. Biggar was uncouth and brutal, and could scarcely succeed in getting members of his own party to stand

by him in his 'assaults' on the House. But Parnell was polished and skilful, had a happy knack of putting other people in the wrong, and used not only to win Irish support, but would occasionally obtain English sympathy.

Parnell's first really notable utterance in the House was made on June 30, during the debate on Butt's motion for an inquiry into the Home Rule demand. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, the Chief Secretary for Ireland, was speaking; Parnell looked coldly and impassively on. How far the speech of the Chief Secretary interested him, how far he was paying any attention to the subject, it would be difficult to tell. At length Sir Michael Hicks-Beach said: 'Of all the extraordinary delusions which are connected with the subject, the most strange to me appears the idea that Home Rule can have the effect of liberating the Fenian prisoners, the Manchester murderers——.' 'No! No!' cried Parnell, with a suddenness and vehemence which startled everyone. The House was shocked at what seemed to be a justification of murder, and there was an indignant murmur of disapprobation. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach paused, and then, looking straight at Parnell and amid sympathetic cheers, said solemnly: 'I regret to hear that there is an hon. member in this House who will apologise for murder.' The House thought that the young member for Meath was crushed, and the cry of 'Withdraw!' 'Withdraw!' rang from all quarters.

But Parnell rose with great dignity and great deliberation, and said in clear and icy accents: 'The right hon. gentleman looked at me so directly when he said that he regretted that any member of the House should apologise for murder that I wish to say

as publicly as I can that I do not believe, and never shall believe, that any murder was committed at Manchester.' This rejoinder was received with loud cheers from the Irish benches, and Sir Michael Hicks-Beach passed from the subject of the 'Manchester murderers.'[1]

[1] On August 1, 1876, a motion for the release of the Fenian prisoners was brought forward by Mr. O'Connor Power. Mr. Bright took part in the debate, and dealing with the case of the Manchester men, said: 'I have regretted that on a former occasion when this matter was before us I did not take the opportunity of saying what I have long thought with regard to the case which is called "The Manchester Outrage." There was in that case one man killed—one man shot—one fatal shot fired, and therefore it may be urged positively that only one man in a certain sense was guilty of murder. I had, living in that neighbourhood, a very painful interview with the relatives of one of the three men who were hanged, and they were not willing to lay the blame upon either of the other two, but they felt very confidently that there were no sufficient grounds for believing that the prisoner in whose fate they were particularly interested was the one who fired the fatal shot. One of the three, I presume, was the guilty person, but the three were hanged. Now, it always appeared to me that the course pursued by the Home Office on that occasion was an unwise one. I am averse to capital punishment, as most members of the House know, but in a case of this kind I think to hang three men for one fatal shot was a mistake—a mistake according to the order and practice of our law, and a great mistake when we look at it in its political aspect. On the occasion I have alluded to, when representations were made, it was denied that this was strictly a political case, or that severity was resorted to because it was a political case; but I have always held the opinion that I held then, and hold now, that it was solely because it was a political case that three men were hanged for the murder of one man. I recollect urging it in this way: If these three men had been out on a poaching expedition, and in the conflict that took place one keeper was killed by one shot, and three men were tried for it, I believe there is no judge who would have sentenced, and no Home Secretary who would have thought it his duty to advise that, these three men should be hanged for the offence. I believe that the three men were hanged because it was a political offence, and not because it was an ordinary murder of one man, committed by one man and by one shot. The other day there was a case in my neighbourhood of an outrage committed by persons connected with a trade union in the neighbourhood of Bolton. Unfortunately a man was attacked by a number of his fellow-workmen and was killed. No doubt all who were present and maltreated the man were guilty of an illegal act, but it is difficult to say who it was that was guilty of the offence of destroying that man's life. Three, I think, were convicted, not of murder, but of manslaughter.

This utterance first fixed the attention of the Fenians on Parnell. Four years later I met a number of Fenians in a town in the North of England. I asked how it came to pass that Parnell gained the confidence of so many Fenians. One of them answered: 'In 1876 we no longer believed in Butt; we thought his way of dealing with the House of Commons was absurd. The House showed no deference to the Irish members, yet Butt was always showing deference to the House. Of course we had no belief in parliamentary agitation, but we wished to see Irish members stand up to the House. The humiliation of England anywhere was, of course, a pleasure to us, and there were some of us who thought that she might be humiliated even in the House of Commons. But it was quite clear that Butt's methods could lead to nothing but the humiliation of Ireland. We had grown quite tired of Butt, though we always liked him for his defence of our people in the State trials. What we wanted was a fighting policy. Even constitutional agitators who would defy England, who would shock English sentiment, who would show a bold spirit of resistance to English law and English custom, would help to keep the national feeling alive. But we knew pretty well that no Irish member would keep up a sustained fight against England unless he was in touch with us. A Constitutionalist could only do good by drawing inspiration from Fenianism, and Fenianism had ceased

It was an illegal act, and they were punished by various terms of imprisonment—from, I think, three to fifteen years. Unless this was a political offence, the evidence of murder was not very much different from the case I am now describing. I believe it was a great mistake. I said it then, and I say it now, and I have, I say, always believed that the extremity of the law was put in force against three men, only one of whom—supposing the one who committed the offence was captured—caused the death of the unfortunate and lamented policeman.'

to inspire Butt. We did not know very much about Parnell at this time. His defence of the Manchester men in the House of Commons was a revelation to us; but we never lost sight of him afterwards, and I think he never lost sight of us.'

Parnell certainly did not lose sight of the Fenians; and he ultimately rode into power on their shoulders. But up to the end of 1876 he continued undistinguished, and almost unnoticed. He had not yet, so to say, drawn out of the ruck, and no one anticipated his extraordinary future.

Parnell hated England before he entered the House of Commons; and his hatred was intensified by his parliamentary experience. He thought the position of the Irish members painfully humiliating. They were waiters on English providence; beggars for English favours. English Ministers behaved as if *they* belonged to the injured nation; as if, indeed, they showed excessive generosity in tolerating Irishmen in their midst at all. This arrogance, this assumption of superiority, galled Parnell. It was repugnant to his nature to approach anyone with bated breath and whispering humbleness; and he resolved to wring justice from England, and to humiliate her in the process. He wanted not only reparation, but vengeance as well.

In those days he would sometimes sit in one of the side galleries, and look down serenely on the performers below. He regarded the whole proceedings, so far as Irish business was concerned, as purely academic. The House of Commons seemed to him to be nothing better than a mere debating society, where Irishmen had an opportunity of airing their oratory, and were, apparently, satisfied when that was done. A distinguished Irish advocate once said that a 'speech was all very

good in its way, but that the verdict was the thing.' In the House of Commons the speech was 'the thing,' and Parnell despised the speech. He wanted 'the verdict.' One night an Irish Bill was under discussion. The member in charge of it acquitted himself with skill and ability. Butt sat near him, and was manifestly much pleased with the performance. When the member sat down the Home Rule leader patted him paternally on the back and beamed satisfaction. Parnell smiled on the scene. When the debate was over, and when the Bill had been handsomely defeated, he met the member in the Lobby, walked up to him, patted him on the back in imitation of Butt, and said: 'You have been a very good boy, you did that very well, and you may now go home—and you won't hear any more about your Bill for another twelvemonth.' Then (in a more serious tone), 'Ah, it is not by smooth speeches that you will get anything done here. We want rougher work. We must show them that we mean business. They are a good deal too comfortable in that House, and the English are a good deal too comfortable everywhere.'

In the autumn a meeting of 'advanced Nationalists' was held at Harold's Cross, near Dublin. Among other business transacted, an address was voted to President Grant, congratulating the American people on the centenary of American independence. Parnell and Mr. O'Connor Power were deputed to present this address to General Grant.

They arrived at New York in October. It so happened that the President was in the city at the time. Parnell suggested that they should see him at once. Grant received them, expressed himself personally grateful for the address, but said it would be necessary

for him to learn what was the etiquette in matters of this kind, and that he would communicate with them on his return to Washington. Grant immediately returned to Washington, whither the delegates proceeded too. There they were informed that it would be necessary to have the address presented through the English Ambassador, but they declined to take this course.

A correspondence then took place between the delegates and the American Secretary of State, they urging that the intervention of the British Minister was unnecessary and objectionable, he insisting that it could not be dispensed with.

Parnell returned to England in November, leaving Mr. O'Connor Power in charge of the address, which was ultimately accepted by the Legislative Assembly over the head of the President. Immediately on his arrival at Liverpool Parnell addressed a Home Rule meeting. He said:

'You have also another duty to perform, which is to educate public opinion in England upon Irish questions, which I have looked upon as a difficult and almost impossible task—so difficult that I have often been tempted to think that it was no use trying to educate English public opinion. The English Press encourage prejudice against Ireland. Englishmen themselves are in many respects fair-minded and reasonable, but it is almost impossible to get at them —it requires intelligence almost superhuman to remove the clouds of prejudice under which they have lived during their lives. I know the difficulties of the position of the Irish people in England. It is not easy for people, living as they are in friendship with their English neighbours, to keep themselves separated from

English political organisations, but they have never been afraid to lay aside private and local considerations in favour of supporting their fellow-countrymen at home. Our position in Ireland is peculiar. One party says we go too far in the Home Rule agitation, while another party says we do not go far enough. You have been told we have lowered the national flag—that the Home Rule cause is not the cause of Ireland a nation, and that we will degrade our country into the position of a province. I deny all this. There is no reason why Ireland under Home Rule would not be Ireland a nation in every sense and for every purpose that it was right she should be a nation. I have lately seen in the city of New York a review of the militia, in which five or six thousand armed and trained men took part, at least half of them being veterans of the war. They marched past with firm step, and armed with improved weapons. They were at the command of the legislature of New York, and they could not budge one inch from the city without the orders of the governor. If in Ireland we could ever have under Home Rule such a national militia, they would be able to protect the interests of Ireland as a nation, while they would never wish to trespass upon the integrity of the English Empire, or to do harm to those they then would call their English brothers. It was a foolish want of confidence that prevented Englishmen and the English Government from trusting Ireland. They know Ireland is determined to be an armed nation, and they fear to see her so, for they remember how a section of the Irish people in 1782, with arms in their hands, wrung from England legislative independence. Without a full measure of Home Rule for Ireland no Irishman would ever rest content.'

One who was present has given me the following account of how Parnell delivered this speech. He says:

'I remember that he came once to speak for us in Liverpool. It was in 1876. He was a bad speaker then—had a bad, halting delivery. In fact, it was painful to listen to him. You would think he would break down every moment. He seemed to be constantly stuck for want of a word. It was horribly awkward for the people listening to him, but, oddly enough, it never seemed awkward to him. I remember a number of us who were on the platform near him would now and then suggest a word to him in the pauses. But he never once took a word from any one of us. There he would stand, with clenched fists, which he shook nervously until the word he wanted came. And what struck us all, and what we talked of afterwards, was that Parnell's word was always the right word, and expressed exactly the idea in his head; our word was simply makeshift, for which he did not even thank us.'

By the end of 1876 Parnell regarded Butt's movement as an absolute failure. Of the innumerable Bills and resolutions which had been introduced by the Irish party since 1871 only one measure of any importance had become law—the Municipal Privileges Act, which enabled municipal corporations to confer the freedom of their cities and to appoint sheriffs. The failure of the parliamentary party was, he thought, in some respects attributable to a want of energy and boldness. The majority of Butt's followers were too apathetic, too deferential to English opinion and sentiment, too fond of English society—in a word, too 'respectable.' Biggar was Parnell's ideal of an

Irish member—a political Ishmael, who would not conciliate and who could not be conciliated. Butt's policy was a policy of peace. Biggar's was the embodiment of a policy of war, and Parnell believed in a policy of war. His faith was centred in a policy of 'aloofness' from all English parties, and indeed from all Englishmen. He regarded them as enemies, and he would treat them as enemies. He did not believe in negotiations. He believed in fighting. The fighting force in Ireland was the Fenians. Any man, Constitutionalist or Revolutionist, who was prepared to fight England anywhere or anyhow was sure of Fenian sympathy, though his methods might not always meet with Fenian approval.

Were the Fenians to be fought on the one hand, and the English on the other? Could any party of Constitutionalists hope to succeed if the Fenians were actively against them? Butt himself had leant on the Fenians in founding the Home Rule movement. What would become of him if the Fenian support were withdrawn? There was the Church, certainly. But what would become of Home Rule if there were to be an open struggle between the Church and the Fenians? The one thing Parnell hated throughout his whole career was quarrels among Irishmen. 'Parnell's great gift,' Mr. Healy once said, 'was his faculty of reducing a quarrel to the smallest dimensions.' He was, in truth, a centre of unity and strength. He was able, if not to reconcile, certainly to neutralise the antagonism of opposing forces and hostile characters. He was, indeed, a great peacemaker as well as a great fighter, and herein lay his power. 'No war' was, we are told, a favourite expression of Elizabeth's at the council board. 'No quarrels' was cer-

tainly a favourite thought, if not a favourite expression, of Parnell. To have any single force which made for Irish nationality in conflict with any other force which made in the same direction, or which could by any possibility be brought to make in the same direction, was utterly abhorrent to him. And yet danger of such a conflict there was in 1876. The Fenians were getting thoroughly tired of Home Rule. They had given the movement a fair trial, and nothing had come of it. It was now time, many of them thought, to look to their own organisation and to that alone. Within the parliamentary ranks there were divisions and dissensions. Butt had ceased to be a power. The constitutional movement was drifting on the rocks. It was a period in the history of the country when everything depended on the appearance of a man. O'Connell would have got the Church at his back, broken with the Fenians, and inaugurated a mighty constitutional agitation. A Stephens would have reorganised Fenianism on a formidable basis, fought the Church and Constitutionalists, and drawn the country into insurrection. But there was no O'Connell, no Stephens. Parnell came; he was unlike both the great agitator and the great conspirator. He was not a son of the Church. He was not a son of the revolution. But he believed profoundly in the power of the one and of the other, and resolved to combine both. This was a herculean labour, but it was not above the stature of Charles Stewart Parnell. 'Ireland,' he once said, 'cannot afford to lose a single man.' That was his creed. To combine all Irishmen in solid mass and hurl them at the Saxon, that was his policy. In the ensuing pages we shall find him pursuing that policy, steadily, skilfully. We shall find him gradually winning

the confidence of the Church and of the Fenians—the two great forces, be it said, in Irish politics—and ultimately obtaining an ascendency over both. We shall find him forming and dominating a strictly disciplined parliamentary party, and at length reaching that position of eminence well described by the title which the people gave him—the 'uncrowned King of Ireland.'

CHAPTER VII

WAR

THE Queen's Speech in opening the parliamentary session of 1877 contained the following paragraph about Ireland:

'You will be asked to constitute one Supreme Court of Judicature for Ireland, and to confer an equitable jurisdiction in the county courts of that country.'

Every question that stirred the nation was calmly ignored — land, education, parliamentary franchise, Home Rule. The people had asked for bread in the shape of legislative freedom; they were offered a stone in the shape of a Judicature Bill. Yet Butt showed no disposition to harass the Government. He was resolved to bring forward his Irish measures, to fight them through the House of Commons in accordance with the ordinary rules of the game, and to abide the result. But Parnell and Biggar were now practically in revolt and on the war track. 'If we are to have parliamentary action,' said the former in one of those short, sharp, and decisive sentences which always meant business, 'it must not be the action of conciliation, but of retaliation,' and on the policy of retaliation he was now more than ever inexorably bent.

In 1876 Parnell had already fleshed his sword. In the spring of 1877 he regularly opened the obstruction campaign. He singled out the Mutiny Bill and the Prisons Bill for attack. Anyone reading 'Hansard' now would see nothing unusual in his proceedings. For anything that appears to the contrary, he might have been influenced by a *bonâ-fide* desire to improve both measures. 'Parnell excelled us all,' said one of his obstructive colleagues, 'in obstructing as if he were really acting in the interests of the British legislators.' He was cool, calm, business-like, always kept to the point, and rarely became aggressive in voice or manner. Sometimes he would give way with excellent grace, and with a show of conceding much to his opponents; but he never abandoned his main purpose, never relinquished his determination to harass and punish the 'enemy.' The very quietness of his demeanour, the orderliness with which he carried out a policy of disorder, served only to exasperate, and even to enrage, his antagonists. One night an Irish member proposed that the committee on the Irish Prisons Bill should be put off, as the Irish members 'would shortly have to attend the grand juries at the assizes in Ireland.' This was barefaced obstruction. But Parnell would have none of it. Rising with the dignity of a Minister responsible for the despatch of public business, he said: 'I think the business of the nation should be attended to before local affairs, and therefore the attendance at the grand juries is no reason for postponing the committee.' Who could charge this man with obstruction? Upon another occasion he moved an amendment to the English Prisons Bill. Mr. Newdigate (who had sometimes gone into the same lobby with him in the divisions on the Bill, for

Parnell drew his amendments with so much skill that he often caught an English vote) asked him to withdraw the amendment. Biggar (who used to say that *he* never withdrew anything) urged Parnell to persevere; but Parnell, with much show of grace, said: 'Out of deference to the committee I will not press my amendment, although I consider I shall be doing wrong in abandoning it. I must, however, say that it is incorrect for any hon. member to say that I am chargeable with obstructing the business of the House. My opinion on obstruction is that when it is employed it should be like the action of the bayonet—short, sharp, and decisive.'

From February 14, when his Bill for facilitating the creation of a peasant proprietary under the operation of the Church Act was rejected, up to April 12 Parnell was constantly in evidence, constantly interfering in the business of the House, constantly obstructing, constantly seeking to turn everything upside down with tantalising politeness and provoking tenacity. 'How came Parnell,' I asked one of his obstructive colleagues, 'to lead you all in these fights? He was not an able speaker, he was deficient in intellectual gifts, which many of you possessed, he had little parliamentary experience.' 'By tenacity,' was the answer. 'Sheer tenacity. He stuck on when the rest of us gave way.'

'What was Parnell's distinguishing characteristic?' I asked another of his colleagues who loved him not. He answered, 'He was a beautiful fighter. He knew exactly how much the House would stand. One night I was obstructing. S—— was near me. He was generally timid, afraid of shocking the House. He said: "O ——, you had better stop or you will be suspended."

"Oh, no," quietly interjected Parnell, who was sitting by us, "they will stand a good deal more than this. You may go on for another half-hour." I did go on for another half-hour or so. Then there was an awful row, and I stopped. Parnell had gauged the exact limit. Another night I was obstructing again. Parnell came in suddenly and said, "Stop now, or there will be an explosion in five minutes, and I don't want a row to-night." In all these things Parnell was perfect.'

It is needless to say that in all these fights Mr. Biggar was his right-hand man. It was a rule of the House that no opposed business should be taken after half-past twelve at night. Biggar used this rule to block every Bill, important or unimportant, which was introduced after the prescribed hour. 'After every order of the day,' wrote the London correspondent of the 'Liverpool Daily Post' in March 1877, 'there is this announcement. "Mr. Biggar: That this Bill be read a second time this day six months."'

Butt was sadly perplexed by the tactics of his two unruly lieutenants. He hated obstruction. He believed it was discreditable and mischievous. And yet the House by its constant rejection of Irish Bills exposed itself to this policy of retaliation. Parnell and Biggar were not without justification. Butt felt this as well as anybody else. Yet he thought, upon the whole, that the policy of 'retaliation' was undignified and useless, and that the proper remedy was more concentration on Irish measures and more persistence in pushing them to the front. He had, however, this difficulty to contend with: the Moderate Home Rulers could not be kept up to the collar, the energetic Irish

members were unruly, the orderly Irish members were apathetic. This was Butt's difficulty. While the House was smarting under Parnell's attacks, much pressure was used by the Moderate Home Rulers and by the English members to induce Butt to crush him. Parnell was aware of this, but he stuck to his guns, and was resolved, in the last resort, to fight it out with his leader rather than abandon the policy of obstruction. In justice to the young member for Meath this much must be said. While in the main his object was obstruction pure and simple, yet he did introduce some amendments with a sincere desire of improving the measures under consideration. I will give an instance. On April 5 he moved an amendment on the Prisons Bill to the effect that any prisoners convicted of treason-felony, sedition, or seditious libel should be treated as first-class misdemeanants. 'It is high time,' he said, 'that an attempt was made to remove from England the reproach that she treated her political prisoners worse than any other country in the world. In France even the Communards, who half burnt Paris, and to whom were attributed the most atrocious designs, were not sent to the hulks or the galleys, but simply expatriated. When history comes to be written there is nothing for which the children of Englishmen now living would blush so much as for the treatment of the [Fenian] men convicted in 1865. . . . I hope that this Bill when it leaves the committee will be so framed that political prisoners will not be treated as murderers, demons, and culprits of the worst order.' A long debate followed, and Parnell ultimately, on the suggestion of Sir Henry James, withdrew the words 'treason-felony,' retaining the words 'sedition' and 'seditious

libel,' and with this alteration the clause was added to the Bill.

But there was more of pure obstruction in his opposition to the Mutiny Bill on April 12. He, Captain Nolan, and Biggar fought many clauses, and at length, about twelve o'clock, Biggar moved to 'report progress.' 'It was quite too late,' he said, 'to go on with the Bill, as there were several important amendments to be proposed.'

Mr. Gathorne-Hardy. 'I hope the committee will pass the unopposed clauses.'

Parnell. 'Will the Government undertake to report progress when Clause 55 is passed?'

Mr. Gathorne-Hardy. 'I propose to take the clauses up to Clause 93.'

Parnell. 'The Government are unreasonable. I have endeavoured to facilitate business. But an example of obstruction was set the other night by hon. members opposite, who would not allow the Bill of the hon. member for Sheffield (Mr. Mundella) to proceed, and not only so, but the Government followed their disorderly supporters into the lobby.' (Cries of 'Order.')

The Chairman. 'The expression just used is certainly one that should not be used by hon. members.'

The unimpassioned page of Hansard gives no notion of the state of excitement into which the House (a full House) was plunged during this altercation. Most of the clauses in question were unopposed. Members were impatient, and anxious to get the business through quickly. There was really nothing which needed serious discussion. But Parnell inexorably blocked the way. The House stormed and raged, but the member for Meath held his ground defiantly. The Moderate Home Rulers were as much shocked at his

conduct as any English member. Butt was not present. He was sitting quietly in the smoking-room. Thither several Irish members hastened to tell their leader what was going on, and to urge him to interfere. English members came to him too, and implored him to save the dignity of Parliament and suppress his unruly follower. Butt, after some hesitation, at length yielded to these importunities, rushed into the House flushed with passion and indignation, and pounced on the member for Meath. 'I regret,' he said, 'that the time of the House has been wasted in this miserable and wretched discussion. If at this hour of the night any member really wished to propose a serious amendment, I would support the motion to "report progress," and so also, I think, would the Secretary for War. But when there was no amendment to a number of clauses, I must express my disapproval of the course taken by the hon. member for Meath. It is a course of obstruction, and one against which I must enter my protest. I am not responsible for the member for Meath, and cannot control him. I have, however, a duty to discharge to the great nation of Ireland, and I think I should discharge it best when I say I disapprove entirely of the conduct of the hon. member for Meath.'

This speech was received with ringing cheers from all parts of the House. But how did the member for Meath take his castigation? He sat calmly, cynically by, watching his leader with a placid smile. Well he knew that the English cheers which greeted Butt only sounded the political death knell of the Home Rule leader. No Irishman who had attacked a comrade in the face of the 'common enemy,' and because he fought the common enemy, could ever again command the

sympathy of the Fenian organisations; and without the help of the Fenians no man could lead the Home Rule movement. Butt had allowed himself to be carried away by the English cheers, and had for the moment thought only of the House of Commons. Parnell cared nothing for the House of Commons, and thought chiefly of the extreme men in Ireland and in England.

Parnell disposed of Butt's oration in a single sentence: 'The hon. and learned gentleman,' he said, 'was not in the House when I attempted to explain why I had not put down notice of my amendments.' That was enough. Butt had attacked him without having heard him in justification of his position. Parnell knew that the single sentence he had spoken in reply would filter through the Fenian mind and would arouse Fenian sympathies; and, as subsequent events proved, he did not count without his host. Four days later he was again in evidence, obstructing as vigorously and persistently as ever.

On April 16 the Marine Mutiny Bill was under consideration. Parnell protested against the clause dealing with crime punishable by death. He suggested that there should be some classification of offences, and that any offence which did not involve any moral depravity, or any injury to an officer, or any other person, might be punished by imprisonment with or without hard labour instead of penal servitude.

All his amendments on the Mutiny Bill (Marine and Army) and on the Prisons Bill were directed to mitigate their severity, and several of them were adopted. There was obstruction—plenty of obstruction, wilful obstruction—in his tactics; but I feel I am

doing him only the barest justice in saying that many of the amendments were inspired by humane and manly considerations.[1]

On June 5 he said, speaking on an amendment moved by Mr. O'Connor Power, that it was unnecessary for him to go further into the question, for the complaints of the Fenian prisoners were fully established before the Devon Commission; but before he sat down he wished to say that the Irish people were deeply interested in this question, that it was a question on which they could go to extremities as they could not go on any other Irish question.

On June 14, 1877, he returned to the subject. He reminded the House that the Devon Commission had recommended that certain relaxations should be made in the treatment of political prisoners, and that they should be kept apart from other convicts; and he trusted the Home Secretary would see his way to give effect to that recommendation.

The breach between Butt and Parnell had now widened much; and before the end of May the struggle for the mastery had commenced.

A lengthy correspondence between them appeared in the 'Freeman's Journal.' Parnell wrote on April 13 complaining of Butt's action in the House of Commons on the previous day:[2]

[1] On the motion of Parnell the following clauses were added to the Prisons Bill on June 14, 1877: 'It shall not be lawful for any jailor to order any prisoner to be confined in a punishment cell for any term exceeding twenty-four hours, nor shall it be lawful for the Visiting Committee of Justices to order any prisoner to be punished by confinement in a punishment cell for any term exceeding fourteen days.' In a case where an inquest is held on the body of a person who dies in prison, no person engaged in any sort of trade or dealing with the prison shall be a juror on such inquest.'

[2] *Ante*, p. 112.

Parnell to Butt

'On that occasion I yielded my judgment to your opinion upon a matter regarding which full individual liberty of action had always been left to each member of our party. You will recollect that upon the only occasion when you suggested that our party should follow you on a question of Imperial policy it was, after a long discussion, decided that each individual should act for himself. I must then, in future, claim for myself that liberty of action upon Imperial and English matters which has hitherto been granted to every member of the party, while I shall continue to follow your lead in regard to Irish questions.'

Butt replied on April 21 in a very long letter, the import of which may, however, be gathered from the following extracts:

'If I rightly interpret your letter, I understand you to say that, while you owe to me in relation to Irish measures that which you are good enough to call "allegiance," your conduct in all Imperial and English measures is free from obligation either to me or the party in whose ranks you have enrolled yourself. . . . I must dissent from your view of the relation in which each member of our party stands to the rest.

'The pledge which we take is clear, plain, and distinct:

'"That, deeply impressed with the importance of unity of action upon all matters that can affect the parliamentary position of the Home Rule party, or the interests of the Home Rule cause, we engage to each other and the country to obtain that unity by taking counsel together, by making all reasonable concessions to the opinions of each other, by avoiding as far as

possible isolated action, and by sustaining and supporting each other in the course that may be deemed best calculated to promote the grand object of self-government which the nation has committed to our care."

'This pledge carefully defines the limits of our obligations. The application of that engagement to our conduct in the House does not depend upon the point whether it relates to Irish or English or Imperial questions, but whether it is such as can affect the parliamentary position of the Home Rule party or the interests of the Home Rule cause. In all matters that affect the parliamentary position of the Home Rule party or the interests of the Home Rule cause we have solemnly bound ourselves to avoid setting up any private opinions of our own, to defer to the judgment of our colleagues, and to sustain and support each other in the course that may be deemed best calculated to promote the great object we have in view. I am sure you will, on reflection, see that to limit the effect of this pledge to our conduct on Irish measures would be an evasion of its plain and direct terms. Were such a construction possible, it would reduce the pledge to an absurdity. It would enable any professing Home Rule member to intrigue with any English party, to give his vote on every Imperial or English question to serve the interests of the faction of which he might be the minion, and to fulfil his pledge to his country by voting two or three times in the year on questions on which his vote could not do his masters any harm.'

Butt went on to say that he had no objection to see Parnell and other Irish members take part in debates on English and Imperial affairs, provided they acted *bonâ fide* in the public interests. 'But,' he added, 'it

is impossible not to see that your action in the House is considered both by friends and enemies as an organised system of policy adopted not for English but for Irish purposes, and one which both friends and enemies do not hesitate to describe as a policy "of obstruction."

'I feel that I am in a position in which I can judge of the effect that is likely to be produced by any "policy of obstruction." It must tend to alienate from us our truest and our best English friends.

'It must waste in aimless and objectless obstruction the time which we might, in some form or other, obtain for the discussion of Irish grievances. It must expose us to the taunts of being unfit to administer even the forms of representative government, and even of discrediting and damaging every movement we make.

'But, if I urge these grounds of prudence, I am not insensible of that which is higher than all prudence—the duty of maintaining before the civilised world the dignity of the Irish nation and the Irish cause. That will only be done while we respect ourselves and our duties to the assembly of which we are members—an assembly to degrade which is to strike a blow at representative institutions all over the world, a blow that will recoil with terrible severity on the very claims we make for our own country, but which, whatever be its effects, would be unworthy of ourselves and our cause.'

Parnell's reply (which I am also obliged to abridge) was written on May 24, 1877:

'Your interpretation of the views which I expressed in my last letter regarding my obligations to yourself (not to the Home Rule party, as you state) is not a

correct one, and does not accurately convey either the expressions used by me or their sense. I did not say, or in any measure convey, that my conduct on all Imperial and English measures is free from any obligation to the Irish party; but I did intend you to understand that I should preserve my individual liberty of action, unfettered by your control, upon those English and Imperial questions upon which the Irish party are agreed not to act as a party; while I have always been ready cheerfully to surrender my own opinion to the majority upon any of those questions that our party decided to take up. You remark that "were the pledge only to embrace our conduct on Irish measures" (which I certainly never argued) "it would enable any professing Home Rule member to intrigue with any English party, to give his vote on every English and Imperial question, to serve the interests of the faction of whom he might be the minion, and to fulfil his pledge to his country by voting two or three times in the year on questions on which his vote could not do his masters any harm."

'Now, unfortunately, all these things are precisely what many Home Rule members are constantly doing, and apparently without remonstrance or even attempt at restraint by you. It has been rendered perfectly evident by the experience of four sessions that "any professing Home Rule member may intrigue with any English party," either Whig or Tory, and yet bring upon himself neither your denunciation nor those of that Irish journal which is supposed to be devoted to your interests. . . .

'Now [to go to another point], my clause on the Prisons Bill regarding the treatment of the political

prisoners was supported by all sections of the English Liberal party, and the Government were compelled to accept it lest they should be defeated on a division. Here, then, no adverse effect as regards the support of Englishmen was produced by my course of action. Subsequently, on the Marine and Army Mutiny Bills, amendments that I moved were supported by the full strength of all sections of the Liberal party present, as many as 146 and 150 voting for some of the amendments, although at this very time the English Press was teeming with complaints of my "obstruction," and you had yourself thought proper to denounce me publicly in the House on similar grounds a night or two previously. Here again no English votes were lost to me owing to my action. Furthermore, by our action on the Mutiny Bills I obtained some important restrictions of power to inflict cruel punishments, and the Government also agreed to submit these Bills to the consideration of a select committee—Bills that for many years had been adopted as a matter of course almost without discussion.

'The hours at or after midnight are always reserved for Irish Bills, and it is a physical impossibility that it could be otherwise. Consequently no action of mine can diminish the chances of Ireland obtaining what she has never had—a share in the Government time. On the other hand, nothing that I have done interferes with the time at the disposal of private members, as I have not interfered with measures brought in by such members.

'I cannot sympathise with your conclusions as to my duty towards the House of Commons. If Englishmen insist on the artificial maintenance of an antiquated institution which can only perform a portion of

its functions by the "connivance" of those intrusted with its working, in the imperfect and defective performance of much of even that portion—if the continued working of this institution is constantly attended with much wrong and hardship to my country, as frequently it has been the source of gross cruelty and tyranny—I cannot consider it is my duty to connive in the imperfect performance of these functions, while I should certainly not think of obstructing any useful, solid, or well-performed work.'

While this correspondence was going on Parnell wrote the following letter to Dr. Kenny with reference to the Tipperary election, then pending:

'My dear Dr. Kenny,—I do not think ——— would be much use. We have too many men of his stamp already, who consider that they are sent here to make a parliamentary reputation and not to attend to the interests of the country. I quite agree with you, it is best to let Mr. Biggar, myself, and others work along quietly for the present. If Butt can only be induced to let us alone, we are quite equal to the task we have set ourselves, which is not a very difficult one.

'Yours very truly,

'Chas. S. Parnell.'

Parnell now resolved to carry on the fight with Butt to the bitter end. The Home Rule leader had the Moderate Home Rulers at his back. The member for Meath relied on the advanced men. The Home Rule Confederation of Great Britain—a body influenced by Fenians—took him up, and under its auspices he addressed public meetings in England and Scotland. 'We got Parnell a platform,' said the founder of this

organisation—himself a member of the Fenian brotherhood—to me some years ago; 'we made him.' It would not be accurate to say that the Fenians made Parnell. Parnell made himself. But it would be accurate to say that in Fenianism he found the lever on which his power turned. Here it will be necessary to add a few words about the Home Rule Confederation of Great Britain.

In 1873 a member of the supreme council of the I. R. B., whom I shall call X., asked Butt if he intended to take any steps for pushing forward the Home Rule cause in England. Butt said that he was rather puzzled to know what to do; he was anxious to found an English organisation, but afraid that the Fenians might smash it. X. said that he did not think they would smash it; that they certainly looked suspiciously on Home Rule and disbelieved in parliamentary agitation, but that nevertheless they would not place themselves actively in opposition to Butt. It was ultimately agreed between Butt and X. that a Home Rule organisation should be formed in England; and X. set to work to form it. He found many difficulties in the way. Many Fenians did not take kindly to the notion of co-operating with the Constitutionalists; they said that union with the Parliamentarians would only weaken their movement. The minds of the people would be fixed on parliamentary agitation and drawn away from Fenianism. Parliamentary agitation would end, as it always had ended, in failure; the upshot of the whole business would be collapse, both of Fenianism and Constitutionalism. X. took a different view. He said: 'We need not give up our own principles by joining the Home Rulers. They go part of the way in our direction;

why not help them so far? In addition we will stiffen their backs by joining them. Here are the Irish in England—a great force; but absolutely lost at present. It is our policy to make the English feel the presence of the Irish everywhere. They don't know what a power the Irish can be made in their midst. The English only recognise power. We must make ourselves troublesome. We can make ourselves troublesome by organising the Irish vote in Great Britain, and by forcing the English candidates to take the Home Rule pledge. We can control the parliamentary movement if we go into it. At all events, let us try.'

X.'s arguments at length prevailed among a certain number of the rank and file of the Fenians, and the Home Rule Confederation of Great Britain was formed.

Butt had promised to attend the inaugural meeting at Manchester. Some of the Moderates, however, got at him, saying that the association was in the hands of the Fenians. He became uneasy, and wrote to X. just on the eve of the meeting to say that he was afraid he could not attend. X. wired back a telegram of nearly 1,000 words, urging Butt not to fail, saying that the meeting had been got up on the strength of his promise to attend, that delegates had been summoned from all parts of Great Britain, and that his absence would be nothing short of an insult. Butt subsequently related to X. the circumstances under which he received the monster telegram:

'I was in court at the time; I was addressing the judges. The telegram was placed in my hands. I opened the envelope—in itself a formidable document

—and out tumbled a package the like of which was certainly never seen in telegraphic form before. The judges looked at it; everybody looked at it. I said: "My lords, will you allow me to read this message? It may be of importance." They said, "Certainly," and I sat down and waded through the telegram, turning over sheet after sheet, to the amazement of the onlookers. But it was not your arguments that made an impression on me—it was the length of the telegram. "The man," I said, "who has sent me this telegram of 1,000 words must be terribly in earnest, and the men behind him must be terribly in earnest too," and so I sent off a reply to you at once.' Butt's reply was short and to the point. 'Shall be with you if I am alive.' And so Butt attended the meeting, and the Home Rule Confederation of Great Britain sprang into being. 'Was the Confederation always under the control of Fenians?' I asked X. 'Always,' he answered. 'They were well represented on the council; our best workers and best organisers were Fenians. Of course, there were plenty of members who were not Fenians, but the Fenians were the masters of the situation.' The Home Rule Confederation of Great Britain did excellent work for the Home Rule cause in Great Britain. The Irish vote was perfectly organised; the Irish voter was made formidable. Every candidate who stood for a constituency where the Irish vote was strong had the following pledge submitted to him: 'To vote for the appointment of a select committee to inquire into and report upon the motive, extent, and the grounds of the demand made by a large proportion of the Irish people for the restoration to Ireland of an Irish Parliament with power to control the internal affairs of the country.'

Between 1874 and 1877 several English candidates took this pledge and were returned to Parliament.[1] 'Did the candidates who took the pledge really believe in Home Rule?' I asked X. 'Not at all,' he said; 'they took it to get the Irish vote. The first man who took it was Jacob Bright. They wired to him from the central Liberal offices in London not to take it, and he refused at first. But we held him firm; "the pledge or no Irish vote," we said. Then we went to the Tory, Powell, and he took it right off. The Liberals were in a devil of a fix; but Jacob turned round and took the pledge too. Then we were in a fix, because as the Tory promised first we ought to have supported him; but the Irish preferred the Liberals, and they particularly liked Jacob Bright. Butt came and made a speech. He said that as both candidates had taken the pledge, the Irish might go for whichever they pleased. They voted for Jacob and put him in. Jacob was a good fellow, and would just as soon take the pledge as not, though of course he wouldn't take it if it wouldn't get him in. That's all that most of them thought about—getting in. Wilfrid Lawson and Joe Cowen were exceptions. We had practically no influence in Lawson's constituency (Carlisle), but he went Home Rule all the same. He believed in it. We had influence in Cowen's constituency (Newcastle), but it was not our influence that weighed with Cowen. He would have voted for Home Rule anyway. He was thoroughly Irish in feeling. There was another respectable man who took the pledge—Joseph Kay, of Salford. He took the pledge at the by-election at

[1] In 1877 the following were the English Home Rulers in the House of Commons: Barran (Leeds), Jacob Bright (Manchester), Gourley (Sunderland), Hibbert (Oldham), Sir W. Lawson (Carlisle), Macdonald (Stafford), R. N. Philips (Bury), Cowen (Newcastle),

Salford in April 1877. Of course we meant Home Rule by the pledge. It was the thin edge of the wedge. It was as far as we could then go. But I don't know that Kay meant Home Rule. He probably meant exactly what the pledge said, an inquiry.'

Joseph Kay, Q.C., was the author of two remarkable books, 'Education of the Poor in England and Europe,' published in 1846, and 'Social Condition and Education in England and Europe,' published in 1850. In the latter work Mr. Kay showed a keen appreciation of the evils produced by the Irish system of land tenure. In fact he was an advanced reformer on all subjects, and felt a deep sympathy for Ireland and the Irish. He married, in 1863, the eldest daughter of Thomas Drummond, whose administration of Ireland during the Melbourne Government (1835-40) has given him an abiding place in the affections of the people. As X. said, Kay was in favour of an 'inquiry' pure and simple; he wished to see what would come of it. He was not sure that it would lead to Home Rule; but he did think that it might lead to an examination and a removal of Irish grievances which might obviate the necessity of Home Rule. However, his supporters in Salford and in London thought chiefly of the Irish vote. With them the question was to get the Liberal candidate in.

Some extracts from letters written by influential Liberals at the time anent the Salford election will make this very clear. Thus, one writes from the House of Commons on April 4: 'I have had a conversation this evening about the Home Rulers. It is most essential that the promise to vote for Mr. Butt's motion should be given cheerfully [by Mr. Kay] and at once, as both Mr. Butt and Lord Francis Cunningham

assure me that such a promise will secure the cordial and thorough support of the Irish voters, and without such promise, whatever else is said, many will abstain, and may possibly, under Bishop Vaughan's influence, go to the other side.'

Another Liberal wrote, on April 6:

'I have had a long talk with S—— and J—— to-day. They are both against any promise to the Irish faction, but I feel a promise will be necessary if *you are to win.*' Ultimately S—— and J—— agreed that it was 'necessary' for Kay to make the 'promise,' in order 'to win.'

J—— himself wrote, oddly enough, on this very 6th of April, saying: 'I understand that the Irish vote is so large that it would be necessary for the Liberal candidate to support Mr. Butt's motion for an inquiry on the subject of Home Rule. Of course I do not know Mr. Kay's views, but I have no doubt that this difficulty can be overcome.'

On April 12 another Liberal wrote: 'I think Mr. Kay should go in for the inquiry into Home Rule. I got that up with Mr. Butt at the Manchester election, and the Tory, Mr. Powell, swallowed it. If it will get the Catholic vote I think Mr. Kay should swallow it too. It means nothing, and I got it up with Mr. Butt for that very reason.'

Mr. Kay did promise to vote for an inquiry, with the approbation of the party managers. But he lost the election. Then the Liberals were, forsooth, scandalised, and ascribed his defeat to 'Home Rule crotchets.' 'London and other newspapers at a distance,' wrote a Salford Liberal, 'may attribute the defeat to the concession to Home Rule. . . . How is it that this burning zeal for putting down Home Rule

crotchets on the part of Liberal newspapers did not manifest itself when a Liberal Home Ruler was elected for Manchester? Verily nothing succeeds like success.'

'Kay lost the seat,' says X., 'by a small majority, and then there was a great howl among the Liberals against Home Rule. They never howled when Liberals got in on the Home Rule ticket; but the moment they lost, then it was the "d——d Irish." But we stuck to our guns. When Waddy stood for Sheffield some time later we made him take the pledge, and put him in. Then there was no howl against the Irish. We showed them our power. We had to be conciliated, and the only way to conciliate us—the only way to get the Irish vote—was to take the Home Rule pledge. That was the root of the matter.'

In 1877 the Home Rule Confederation of Great Britain was, then, a formidable body, and to it Parnell came when his struggle with Butt had reached a crisis. X. and the Fenians within the Confederation, though warmly attached to Butt, were thoroughly out of sympathy with his conciliatory tactics. They believed not in soft words, but in hard blows. I have already said that the Irishman who carries out a fighting policy against England in any shape or form is bound to command the sympathy of the rank and file of the Fenian organisation.

Throughout 1877 X. saw Parnell frequently in London. Parnell said that in order to keep up the fight in Parliament he should be supported in the country. 'You must get me a platform,' he said to X. in the summer of 1877. 'You must organise meetings in England. I must show that I have something at my back. A few men in the House of Commons

cannot carry on the struggle alone. We must have encouragement outside.' X. organised the meetings. 'In a very short time,' he said, 'I organised thirteen meetings. I came to the House of Commons and told Parnell. I expected to find him very much pleased. But suddenly he looked quite melancholy. "Oh," said he, "that will never do." "What will never do?" said I. "Thirteen meetings," said he, with a most lugubrious look; "you will have to knock one off or put on one. Don't you know thirteen is a most unlucky number?"'

On May 29 Parnell addressed what was practically a Fenian gathering at Glasgow. Speaking on obstruction he said:

'I am satisfied to abide by the decision of the Irish people. Are they for peace, and conciliation, or for hostility and war? (Cries of "War.") Are you for making things convenient for England, and for advancing English interests? If so I will bow to your decision, but my constituents will have to get someone else to represent them.'

On July 2 he was in his place in Parliament, again carrying on the war with renewed vigour. The second of July was a famous night in the obstruction campaign. The House was in Committee of Supply. About midnight Mr. O'Connor Power moved to report progress. 'He declined to vote away the public money at such a late hour.' This was not quite the mode of obstruction Parnell favoured. It was too transparent, and gave no opportunity of amending some particular measure so as to show useful results if the charge of obstruction were made. Nevertheless, he stood by his colleague. The motion was defeated by 128 votes to 8. But the fight was kept up. Mr. O'Donnell next moved 'that the

chairman do now leave the chair.' This motion was defeated by 127 to 6. Then Major O'Gorman came to the front amid 'strong expressions of disapprobation,' and moved to 'report progress,' and so the battle went on. Obstructive motion succeeded obstructive motion, until the House was thrown into a fever of excitement and anger. At three o'clock in the morning, when the obstructives were reduced to five, Parnell, with characteristic coolness, asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer what he wanted. 'Does the right hon. gentleman want a victory over five Irishmen? What is the principle for which he is contending?'

The Chancellor of the Exchequer answered: 'That a small minority shall give way to a large majority.'

But Mr. O'Connor Power, who led the fight, would not give way, and the struggle continued. At half-past three Mr. Whalley protested that the business of the House ought to be carried on 'in the light of day.' The House was weary and angry; but the unconscious humour of this appeal was too much. It was a brilliant July morning, and the 'light of day' was streaming in through the open windows. The House roared, and Whalley succumbed. Mr. O'Donnell rose nearly an hour later to protest once more 'against the shame of this midnight legislation.' The House, however, sat on steadily voting down the irrepressible five, who kept alternately moving that 'the chairman do report progress' and that 'the chairman do now leave the chair' until 7 A.M., when the Government threw up the sponge and left the obstructives triumphant.

On July 15 Parnell addressed a great meeting at Manchester, one of X.'s thirteen, or rather fourteen meetings. He said: 'For my part, I must tell you that I do not believe in a policy of conciliation of English

feeling or English prejudices. I believe that you may go on trying to conciliate English prejudice until the day of judgment, and that you will not get the breadth of my nail from them. What did we ever get in the past by trying to conciliate them?'

A Voice. 'Nothing except the sword.' (Applause.)

Parnell. 'Did we get the abolition of tithes by the conciliation of our English taskmasters? No; it was because we adopted different measures. (Applause.) Did O'Connell gain emancipation for Ireland by conciliation? (Cries of "No.") I rather think that O'Connell in his time was not of a very conciliatory disposition, and that at least during a part of his career he was about the best-abused Irishman living. (Laughter and loud applause.) Catholic emancipation was gained because an English king and his Minister feared revolution. (Applause.) Why was the English Church in Ireland disestablished and disendowed? Why was some measure of protection given to the Irish tenant? It was because there was an explosion at Clerkenwell and because a lock was shot off a prison van at Manchester. (Great applause.) We will never gain anything from England unless we tread upon her toes; we will never gain a single sixpennyworth from her by conciliation.' (Great cheering.)

On July 25 there was another encounter between the Irishmen and the Government. The South Africa Bill—the Bill for the annexation of the Transvaal—was in committee. It was opposed, not only by Parnell and his little band, but by some British members as well, notably by Mr. Courtney and Mr. Jenkins. On this particular night Mr. Jenkins and 'other hon. members' were charged by Mr. Monk with 'abusing the forms of the House.' Mr. Jenkins individually

repudiated the imputation, and moved that Mr. Monk's words 'be taken down.'

Parnell. 'I second that motion. I think the limits of forbearance have been passed in regard to the language which hon. members opposite have thought proper to address to me and to those who act with me.' Here the Chancellor of the Exchequer somewhat precipitately pounced on Mr. Parnell, and moved that his words 'be taken down.' The House expected Parnell to withdraw or explain. He would do neither. On the contrary, he delivered, amidst constant interruption, a series of short, cutting speeches which irritated the House, and expressed his own utter contempt of the whole proceedings. Sir Stafford Northcote watched him carefully to see if, under the excitement of the moment, he might slip into some incautious phrase which would deliver him into the hands of his enemies. At last the moment for which the Chancellor had anxiously watched arrived. Parnell, concluding his remarks with apparent warmth and raising his voice almost to a shriek, while the assembly, wild with passion, surged around him, said: 'As it was with Ireland, so it was with the South African Colonies; yet Irish members were asked to assist the Government in carrying out their selfish and inconsiderate policy. Therefore, as an Irishman, coming from a country that had experienced to its fullest extent the results of English interference in its affairs and the consequences of English cruelty and tyranny, I feel a special satisfaction in preventing and thwarting the intentions of the Government in respect of this Bill.'

There was a roar of indignation from all parts of the House as the member for Meath resumed his seat. Sir Stafford at once arose, amid a salvo of cheers,

which were repeated again and again as he moved 'that the words of the hon. member be taken down.' The Speaker was sent for. Parnell's words were taken down: 'I feel a special satisfaction in preventing and thwarting the intentions of the Government.' The wily rebel had at length been caught napping, his coolness had for once deserted him. So thought the House, as Sir Stafford moved, amid general applause: 'That the hon. member for Meath be suspended from his functions of speaking and taking part in the debates of the House until Friday next.' The Speaker at once called on Parnell to 'explain.' Parnell rose, and in his iciest manner said that his words had been accurately taken down; though he rather thought that he had used the word 'interest' instead of 'satisfaction.' He regretted that the whole of his speech was not taken down, as he wished to emphasise his condemnation of the Government policy. 'I need not refer to history to support the accusation that successive Governments of this country have always treated those whom they thought they could bully and oppress without reference to their interest.'

This was not 'explanation,' it was 'defiance,' and the Speaker called Parnell to order. Parnell's whole answer was that he condemned the policy of the Government, and would persevere in his efforts to thwart it. He then withdrew, and taking up a position in the gallery looked down on the scene below. He soon witnessed the complete discomfiture of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and his own absolute triumph. It was the Chancellor, not Parnell, who had been carried away by the excitement of the moment. Parnell had said that he would 'thwart,' not the business of

the *House of Commons* (which was the meaning attached to his words in the general confusion), but the intentions of the *Government*—a very different thing.

Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen, who had not a particle of sympathy with Parnell, put the case clearly before the House after Parnell had withdrawn. 'I am sure,' said he, 'that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not contend that the member for Meath should be punished because he wished to thwart the intentions of the Government.' 'Certainly not,' said Sir Stafford with emphasis. The House soon saw the situation. Sir Stafford had blundered. Mr. Gathorne-Hardy rose immediately to move that the 'debate (on the motion to suspend Parnell) be adjourned until Friday.'[1] The motion was carried, and Parnell, escorted by Biggar, returned to the House, and resumed his speech on the South African Bill just at the point where he had been interrupted, as if nothing unusual had occurred.

On Friday, July 27, Sir Stafford Northcote proposed two new rules for dealing with obstruction, the effect of which was (1) that a member twice declared out of order might be suspended; (2) that the motion 'to report progress,' and kindred motions, could only be moved once by the same member in the same debate. Parnell offered no serious opposition to these rules. He knew it would be useless. But he made a short speech in defence of his own conduct, which may be taken as a fair specimen of his concentrated style of argument and general mode of repelling obstructive accusations.

'I suppose every newspaper in England contained charges of obstruction against me on account of my action on the Prisons Bill. But what was the result

[1] The debate was never resumed.

of my action? Why, it was that more of the clauses of the present Bill have been proposed and carried by me than by all the Conservative members put together. Those clauses were admittedly useful and good ones; and I was told afterwards that if I confined myself to moving such amendments or to discussing measures in that way, instead of obstructing them, I would be filling a good and useful part in the House. Then came the discussions on the Mutiny Bill. I ventured to propose some amendments in those time-honoured institutions, which I suppose have not been interfered with for a quarter of a century, and again I was told I was obstructing. I moved some amendments in committee, but, owing to the paucity of attendance, I did not get many members to support them—not more than 40 or 50. There was also the disadvantage that they had been prepared hastily, and that I had not had time to get them on paper. I determined therefore to move them again on report. This also was obstruction. What right had an Irish member to move amendments on report which had already been rejected? Again I was justified by the results; for I was supported by 140 or 150 members, including the whole of the front Opposition bench, and including gentlemen who had since been loud in charging me with obstruction.'

Four days after the adoption of the new rules obstruction was carried to an extent hitherto unparalleled in the history of the House of Commons. On Tuesday, July 31, the House was again in committee on the South African Bill. The Government wished to push the measure through the committee stage that night. The Irishmen were determined to prevent them. About 5 P.M. Mr. O'Donnell began operations by moving 'to report progress.' Parnell supported the motion, saying

that there was much information that the House yet needed on the whole question, and protesting against rash legislation. Sir William Harcourt quickly joined in the fray, interrupting Parnell, charging him with deliberate obstruction, and appealing to the House to put down the small minority who sought to destroy its utility. When Sir William sat down, Parnell said, in the most unruffled manner, 'Sir, I will now continue my observations.' He was greeted with a perfect storm of yells from every part of the House. He paused, waited patiently until there was a lull, and then went on with his remarks. The chairman called him to order, but still he persevered with excellent temper and great courtesy, complimenting the chairman on the fairness of his ruling, but nevertheless showing no intention of giving way. Finally the motion 'to report progress' was withdrawn. But other obstructive motions rapidly followed, and the House was soon thrown into a ferment of disorder. At one stage of the proceedings the din was so great that Parnell, finding it impossible to command the attention of the chairman, walked very coolly from his place below the gangway to the table, and there, amid a lull caused by his supreme audacity, resumed his observations.

Upon another occasion he warned hon. members that they were wasting the time of the House in entering into personal quarrels, instead of sticking to the Bill. 'As for the threats of physical endurance held out to me, I can assure the House if hon. members divide themselves into relays, my friends[1] and I can divide ourselves into relays too.'

At three o'clock in the morning Butt burst in upon

[1] Parnell's force 'all told' numbered five men—Biggar, O'Donnel, O'Connor Power, Kirk, and Parnell.

the scene, denounced the obstructives, and then disappeared. But the fight went on. At 7 A.M. the Chancellor of the Exchequer asked the minority to yield. 'They were suffering considerable physical inconvenience,' he said, and he recognised the gallantry with which the struggle had been carried on. But Parnell would not yield. 'The Government are bringing up reserve forces,' he said, 'the first mail-boat will bring them from Ireland; and even in London the member for Cavan (Biggar), though now peacefully asleep, will soon return like a giant refreshed.' At 7.40 A.M. Biggar re-appeared and informed the House that he had had 'a long sleep and a good breakfast,' and was ready to carry on the fight *à outrance*. Parnell retired at 8 A.M., but was back again at twelve noon, Mr. O'Donnell, Mr. Kirk, Captain Nolan, Mr. Gray, and Biggar, having meanwhile kept the obstructive flag flying. At twelve Parnell pressed the Government to allow progress to be reported; but the Government refused. The fight then went on for two hours longer, when at 2 P.M. the Bill was passed through committee and the House adjourned, having sat continuously for twenty-six hours. Through that long sitting there was one occupant of the Ladies' Gallery who never deserted her post—Miss Fanny Parnell.

Parnell was now one of the most universally detested men in England. In Ireland and among the Irish in Great Britain he was a hero. He had flouted the House of Commons, he had harassed the Government, he had defied English public opinion. These were his claims to Irish popularity. 'The Fenians,' said X., 'did not wish public attention to be fixed on Parliament. But Parnell fixed it on

Parliament by fixing it on himself. Yet many of our people thought that he was simply wasting his time. He was a man of energy and resource, that was clear. But were not his powers lost in Parliament? Could not his abilities be turned to infinitely better account in the Fenian organisation? So many of our people thought. And in fact I was, about this time, deputed to ask Parnell to join us. I did ask him. He said "No" without a moment's hesitation. He had the fullest sympathy with us. He wished our organisation to remain intact. He had no desire to interfere with us in any way. But he said we ought not to interfere with him. He felt that he could turn the parliamentary machine to good account. He had no doubt on the point. He was not disposed to argue the question. All he would say was that he saw his way quite clear. "Have patience with me," he said; "give me a trial for three or four years. Then, if I cannot do anything, I will step aside. But give me a trial and have patience with me!" That was a favourite phrase of his, "have patience."'

'What was it about Parnell that struck you most?'

X. 'His silence. It was extraordinary. One was not accustomed to it. All Irish agitators talked. He didn't. He listened with wonderful patience. His reserve was a revelation. We used to say: "If ever there was a man for a secret society, this is the man—he can hold his tongue!" But I could never discover that Parnell had the least notion at any time of joining us. That was just what was so remarkable about him. He never led any of us to believe that he would become a Fenian, and nevertheless he gained a complete ascendency over us. Why he gained this ascendency nobody could very well tell, but that he gained it everyone felt.

Then he was delightful to do business with: so quick, so ready, so clear-headed, and never in doubt about anything which ought to be done. He was a great man of action.'

'Was he at this time pleasant, genial, sociable?'

X. 'Pleasant, certainly, but genial, sociable—scarcely. All the pleasure was in doing business with him. He was always at his best when dealing with practical questions. In general conversation he drooped. I think he hated talking. However, I have seen Parnell "at play." One evening coming from the House of Commons, in April 1877, I said: "Mr. Parnell, do you ever go to places of amusement?" "Oh, yes, sometimes," he said; "would you like to go to any place now?" I said, "Yes; let us go to the theatre." "Oh, no," said he, "let us go and see Dan O'Leary walk."[1] And we went to the Agricultural Hall to see the walking match between O'Leary and Weston. Parnell took a keen interest in the match, but the interest was centred entirely in O'Leary. O'Leary won and Parnell was highly pleased. The band struck up "God save the Queen" as soon as the match was over. "What nonsense!" said Parnell, "why, it ought to be 'God save Ireland' in honour of Dan O'Leary—the man who won. Make them play 'God save Ireland.'" I said that was impossible; that it was the custom of the country to play "God save the Queen" at the end of these entertainments. "Oh, nonsense!" said he, "they must compliment the man who won, that's only fair. Tell them to play 'God save Ireland'; explain the reason. Here, give them

[1] Dan O'Leary was a native of Cork and a naturalised citizen of the United States. In April 1877 there was a great walking match between him and Weston (an American), at the Agricultural Hall, Islington, for 1000*l.*, or 500*l.* aside. The match lasted six days and O'Leary won.

these two sovereigns." Well, I laughed at the notion; but he was so earnest that I went off to the band. The bandmaster was a German. I did not ask him to play "God save Ireland," for I knew he would not understand it. But I asked him to play "Tramp, tramp, tramp, the boys are marching," which is the same tune. He said: "Oh, now we have played 'God save the Queen' it is all over." I explained to him that "Tramp, tramp, tramp, the boys are marching" was very appropriate, and that O'Leary, who had won, was anxious to hear it. The German smiled at this, and seemed to think there was something in it. At the same time I slipped four sovereigns into his hand (two from myself as well as Parnell's two), and the band immediately struck up "Tramp, tramp," &c., to the delight of Parnell and to the bewilderment of everybody else. I remember Sir John Astley was there, and he was very vexed.'

'Had Parnell any sense of humour?'

X. 'Oh, yes, he had, but it was very peculiar. He would never laugh at the ordinary good story. In fact, you never could tell what would exactly amuse him. Certain things used to tickle him very much, though other people used not to see much fun in them. For instance, John Barry and Garrett Byrne, two of the stoutest men of the Irish party, were "paid off" on one occasion to "schedule" the distressed districts. Parnell used to smile immoderately at this (he never laughed outright). "Look," he would say, "at the tellers for the *distressed* districts," and he would enjoy the joke very quietly to himself. His face used quite to beam at the idea when he would see Barry or Byrne, fat and well favoured, walking across the lobby. There was a farmer in County Wicklow named Codd—

Nicholas Codd; he was popularly called Nicky Codd. He had a dispute with his landlord. He offered the landlord a reduced rent, which the landlord would not accept. An ambassador was sent to Nicky to see if a compromise could be arranged. "But suppose, Mr. Codd," said the ambassador, "that the landlord insists on not accepting your offer, is there not some alternative." "Yes," said Nicky, "there is." The ambassador was satisfied. He thought that they would at length arrive at a *modus vivendi*. "What is the alternative, Mr. Codd?" said he. "He may go to hell," said Nicky. I told this story to Parnell and it tickled him greatly. Afterwards, whenever he was engaged in negotiations himself, and whenever he made an offer which was refused, he would say, "Very well; they can take Nicky Codd's alternative." Nicky Codd's alternative became quite a saying of his.'

Another informant, one of Parnell's obstructive colleagues in the House of Commons, corroborates, more or less, X.'s statement about Parnell's 'social qualities.' This gentleman also said that Parnell was rather 'pleasant than genial, or sociable, though he always had a charm of manner which made him a most agreeable companion. We [the obstructives] used to dine together at Gatti's in the Strand. He certainly did not contribute much to the "fun" of the meeting. He never told a good story, he was not a good conversationalist in any sense, but he was appreciative and a splendid listener. We all talked around him, and he seemed to enjoy the conversation while taking little part in it. He was only "on the spot" when something had to be done. One evening he and I were walking along Oxford Street (I think). We passed a music-hall. He looked at the people going in and

said: "Let us go in to this place," and we went in. But he took little interest in the performance. He sat down in a dreamy state and seemed to me to be half asleep most of the time. But an acrobat soon appeared, and Parnell suddenly woke up. He watched this man all the while, then said to me, "Now, why should that man be tumbling about on the stage and I sitting here? Why shouldn't I be on the stage and he here? Chance, just that. You see everything is chance."

'This seemed to show the democratic strain which ran through the Parnells' character. Aristocratic and autocratic as he was, he couldn't recognise anything but chance in the arrangement of things. The accident of birth was everything.'

Parliament was prorogued on August 14. No measure of any importance had been passed for Ireland. Another year of failure had been added to the record of the Parliamentarians.

Land, education, franchise, all questions great and small were left unsettled; while, as for Home Rule, the 'Times'[1] well expressed English public opinion on the subject in the following contemptuous sentences:

'Parliament will not, cannot grant Home Rule. The mere demand for it lies beyond the range of practical discussion. The utmost favour which the House of Commons can show to its advocates is to listen to them with patience and courtesy once a year.'[2] England would not legislate for Ireland, nor allow Ireland to legislate for herself; that was the situation.

[1] *Times*, April 20, 1877.

[2] Butt's annual motion for an inquiry into the nature, extent, and grounds of the demand for Home Rule was rejected in 1877 (April 24) by 417 to 67 votes. The following English members voted for the motion: Barran (Leeds), Jacob Bright (Manchester), Gourley (Sunderland), Hibbert (Oldham), Lawson (Carlisle), Macdonald (Stafford). Philips (Bury), Cowen (Newcastle).

The Irish people were steadily losing faith in parliamentary agitation; but they watched the career of Parnell with interest and curiosity. What would become of him? Would he remain in Parliament or would he glide into revolution? That was the question which many men in Ireland asked themselves in 1877.

On August 25 Parnell and Biggar attended a great meeting at the Rotunda, Dublin. 'About this time,' says one who was present, 'it was a question among advanced men whether Parnell or Biggar would take foremost place. The Rotunda meeting settled it. The gathering was practically got up by the Fenians. Biggar and Parnell both spoke. Biggar made a very long speech and produced no effect.

'Parnell then came forward. He made a short, quiet speech, badly delivered; but it produced great effect. We said, talking the matter over afterwards: "Biggar has said all he had to say, but Parnell has barely opened his mind to us; there is a lot behind."'

Nevertheless, Parnell stated his views with characteristic clearness, and in the language best suited to the audience he addressed. 'I care nothing,' he said, 'for this English Parliament and its outcries. I care nothing for its existence, if that existence is to continue a source of tyranny and destruction to my country.'

On September 1 the most remarkable event which had yet taken place in the life of Parnell occurred. On that day the Home Rule Confederation of Great Britain held their annual meeting at Liverpool. I must again fall back on X. for an account of what happened: 'Butt was at this time our president, but many of our people had lost confidence in him. We all were warmly attached to him; for he was one of the most

genial and affectionate of men. Then he had defended the Fenian prisoners, and had afterwards thrown himself heart and soul into the amnesty movement. But his conciliatory tactics in the House of Commons, his submission to the House of Commons, his deference to English opinion and feeling, made us distrust him; not his earnestness, not his anxiety to do the best for Ireland, but his power to effect anything. He was courting English opinion, instead of leaning on us. We thought his policy hopeless. We believed all the time that you could get nothing out of England but by fighting her, by showing her we were a power, and that if she did not grant our demands we could and would do her harm. The Irish voters in England had forced English candidates to take the Home Rule pledge. It was not love of us; it was not belief in Home Rule; it was simply the knowledge that they could not do without us. Well, Butt was really ignoring all that. He talked in the House of Commons as if he could, by mere reason and eloquence, persuade the English to give a Parliament to Ireland. Why, it was nonsense. Parnell's tactics were very different. He did not believe in talk. He did not waste time in argument. He thought only of one thing (as the Yankees say), twisting the tail of the British lion. That was the true policy. But it was not the policy of Isaac Butt.

'Well, as the time for holding the meetings of the Confederation came round I saw Parnell, and discussed the situation with him. He said to me one night: "I think there must be quite a new departure in our party. We are only at the beginning of an active forward policy; but it must be pushed to extremes. A few men in the House of Commons can do nothing

unless they are well supported in the country. Something striking must be done. Your organisation must do something striking. You must show plainly you mean to stand by the active men in the House of Commons." That was all he said, but it was enough. "Something striking must be done." I well remember how he said these words; what suppressed energy there was in the voice and manner of the man, and what a strange voice. And how the words used to be forced, as if they were too precious to be parted with—"Something striking must be done"—with outstretched hands and clenched fists, and eyes that went through you all the time. Well, I left Parnell, determined that Butt should be deposed, and that Parnell should become president of the Confederation. That was the most "striking thing" I could think of. It was very painful. I was very fond of Butt. He was himself the kindest-hearted man in the world, and here was I going to do the unkindest thing to him. I had brought him into the association, I had made him president, and here was I now going to depose him. But Parnell's words, "Something striking must be done," rang in my ears, and I felt he was right. But it was a sad business all the same. The meeting took place in September. There was a great gathering. Of course the Fenians bossed the show, and they were determined to a man to make Parnell president. Butt was there, Parnell was there, everyone was there. And what a contrast between Butt and Parnell! Butt with his leonine head, his beaming face, his sparkling eyes, and the merry laugh which used to ring out so cheerily and musically. Parnell, cold and reserved, dignified and almost austere. "My dear fellow, delighted to see you," Butt would say, and he would almost take you into his arms. How

different Parnell's "How do you do, Mr. ——?" with a handshake which was warm though hard, and a smile which was sweet and gracious; you felt there was a gulf between you and him. It was different with Butt. You felt he brought himself down to your level. You forgot his genius in his pleasant homely ways. But Parnell never descended. No matter how familiar he might be, he kept the distance always between himself and you. He was always encased in steel. Well, the hour of business came. One of the first items on the agenda was the election of president. Parnell was proposed and seconded, and elected by acclamation. There was no competitor. The whole thing was done in a quiet business-like way, as if it were a mere matter of form. I looked at Butt. There was no mistaking his feelings. He felt the blow keenly. He rose, after a little time, and said that he was obliged to go to Dublin on urgent matters of business, and hoped that the meeting would excuse his absence. He then retired. I followed him from the hall. There was no blinking the fact—he was greatly pained by what had happened. I determined to tell him frankly the reason why we had chosen Parnell—that we wanted an advanced policy, and that Parnell was the man to carry it out. I came up with Butt near the door. "Mr. Butt," I said, "I am very sorry for what has happened, but it could not be helped." He turned round; his eyes were filled with tears, as he said in the most touching way, "Ah! I never thought the Irish in England would do this to me." Well, my voice stuck in my throat. I couldn't say anything. Butt took my hand in both his, pressed it, and rushed off. There was not a bit of malice in the man. He was full of sorrow, but I do not think he was angry with anyone.

I went back to the meeting. Parnell was there, looking like a bit of granite. But no one could help thinking he was the man to fight the English; he was so like themselves, cool, callous, inexorable, always going straight to the point, and not caring much how he got there, so long as he did get there. There was one thing about Parnell on which the Fenians believed they could rely, his hatred of England. They felt that that would last for ever.'

The election of Parnell as president of the Home Rule Confederation of Great Britain was the turning-point in his career. The Irish in England and Scotland had practically passed a vote of censure on Butt, had practically endorsed the policy of Parnell. 'The Irish in Great Britain,' Parnell said to X., 'must take the lead. It is easier for the advanced men to push forward here than in Ireland. Ireland will follow.'

'How did he come to rely on the Fenians? How did he know anything about them?'

X. 'How did he know anything? By instinct. He knew nothing of the details of Fenianism. He hated details—all details. But he knew that Fenians were men who had run risks, and were ready to run risks again.

'A Constitutionalist was a man who was ready to go into Parliament for Ireland. A Fenian was a man who was ready to go into penal servitude for Ireland. Parnell grasped that fact. He felt the Fenians were the men to drive the ship, but he wanted to steer her himself. That was about the state of the case. Of course many of the Fenian leaders did not want to drive the ship for Parnell, but the rank and file of the Fenians did. They believed that Parnell would not steer the ship into an English port, and that he would

steer her into an Irish port, and perhaps a port not far from the one of their choice.'

The following incident, related to me by an official of the Home Rule Confederation of Great Britain, shows how from the beginning Parnell kept in touch with the advanced men. 'The first time I saw Parnell was in 1875—the time of the O'Connell centenary. The members of the Confederation resolved to attend the Dublin demonstration in honour of O'Connell. We came in great force from Liverpool, Manchester, and other northern towns. On arriving in Dublin, I was deputed to call on the Dublin organisers and to arrange for the place which our men should take up in the procession. I waited on a gentleman whose name I now forget. He met me very bluntly and said, "Oh, we are not going to give a place in the procession to Fenians." I replied: "We are not Fenians. We represent the Home Rule Confederation of Great Britain, and surely we ought to have a place." But he would not give way. Of course there were Fenians amongst us, and there were a good many Fenian sympathisers; we appreciated the earnestness and grit of the Fenians, and we sympathised with the men who had suffered for Ireland. But the majority of the men who came from England were not, so far as I know, sworn Fenians. I came back and told our people what had happened, how we had been refused a place in the procession. "Oh!" said they, "very well; if they do not give us a place, we will take one ourselves." Accordingly, when the day came we formed in order with our cars and banners, and took up a position in advance of everybody else—in fact, we headed the procession—and marched forward. Some of the Dublin organisers were much annoyed, and very foolishly told the coal-

porters to dislodge us. The coal-porters generally had the place of honour in these processions since O'Connell's time. In fact they used to be called "O'Connell's bodyguard." Well, so far as we were concerned we did not want a front place; we dropped into the place as much by accident as anything else. The coal-porters came forward in great numbers. When they saw us with our banners flying, "Liverpool Home Rule Branch," "Manchester Home Rule Branch," and so forth, and at the head of all an amnesty car with the words "Freedom for the Political Prisoners," they simply cheered us and fell in, in the rear. Then P. J. Smyth—as a protest, I suppose, against our insubordination—swooped down on us with a number of men, and cut the traces of the amnesty car, and drove off the horses. Then I saw Parnell for the first time. He dashed to the front with a number of others—O'Connor Power was there and a lot more—and they seized the traces and dragged the car forward themselves, while we all cheered heartily. We then got to the place in Sackville Street where the centenary address was to be delivered. Lord O'Hagan had written the address. But we objected to his reading it. We said O'Hagan was a Whig, and the proper person to address us was Butt, the Home Rule leader. Butt could not be found, whereupon [X.] went off and discovered Butt at the Imperial Hotel, brought him along at once, and then he addressed us from the platform. So altogether the Irish in England asserted themselves pretty firmly. But we had plenty of sympathisers in Dublin. The Dublin Fenians and the Fenians from the country of course stuck by our Fenians. Afterwards we adjourned to the Imperial Hotel, where we all talked

over the day's doings. Parnell was at the Imperial Hotel too, but he did not talk. Everybody talked but him. He seemed to be a shy, diffident, gentlemanly young fellow. Looking at him in the room at the Imperial you would never think that he would have flung himself into the work at the amnesty car as he did.'

During September Parnell addressed several meetings in Great Britain and Ireland, dealing chiefly with the question of obstruction. In these speeches he never failed to impress on his hearers the necessity for parliamentary action—vigorous parliamentary action. He never hesitated to tell the Fenians that there must be parliamentary agitation. He never hesitated to tell the Constitutionalists that outside Parliament there must be forces to co-operate with the men within. 'The followers of Mr. Butt,' he said at Burslem in Staffordshire on September 8, 'say we must behave as the English members behave; in fact, we must be Englishmen. We must go into English society and make ourselves agreeable, and not cause a ruffle on the smooth sea of parliamentary life, lest we forget our position as gentlemen and as members of the British House of Commons. Mr. Biggar and myself, however, think that that is a wrong view to take, and that it is better for us always to remember that we are Irish representatives.' At Kilmallock, on September 17, he sounded another note: 'We none of us can do any good unless the Irish people stand behind us; but if the people stand behind us I care nothing for the threats of the Chancellor of the Exchequer—these funny old womanish threats; I care not for the threats of any Englishman. We shall show them that with the Irish people at our backs we

shall meet their threats with deeds.' At Greenock, on September 22, where the Fenians were in force, he declared: 'We must carry out a vigorous and energetic policy in the House of Commons. If that be done, then I believe we have a power in Parliament of which few men have any notion.' Addressing a meeting of his own constituents, where Fenians were not strongly represented, on September 24, he said: 'I think that opposition to English rule is best which is most felt. . . . O'Connell gained Catholic emancipation outside the House of Commons. . . . No amount of eloquence could achieve what the fear of an impending insurrection, what the Clerkenwell explosion and the shot into the police van, had achieved.'

In October there was a conference of Irish members in the City Hall, Dublin. Here Butt denounced obstruction with impassioned eloquence, and singled out Parnell for special animadversion.

Parnell replied briefly and quietly. He said he did not care whether his policy was called a policy of obstruction or not. There was no value in a name; it was a policy of energy and earnestness, and that was what the Irish people wanted. Mr. O'Connor Power and Mr. A. M. Sullivan, two eloquent speakers, defended the 'forward' policy at greater length. Indeed, Parnell left the talking to them.

Parnell now felt he had many of the rank and file of the Fenians at his back, and he believed that the future was with them. Butt's policy of conciliation only helped to estrange Fenian sympathisers and to undermine the influence of the Home Rule leader.

In December an event fraught with important results in the development of Parnell's relations with the Fenians occurred. Michael Davitt, a Fenian

convict, was released from Dartmoor Prison. Davitt was born near Straide, in the County Mayo, in 1846. When he was quite a child his parents emigrated to England, settling at Haslingden, near Manchester. There Davitt grew up. He attended a Wesleyan school in the town, entered a factory (where he lost his right arm, which was caught accidentally in the machinery), became in turn an assistant letter-carrier, a bookkeeper in the post office, a commercial traveller, and finally joined the Fenian organisation in 1870. He was tried at Newgate for treason-felony, found guilty, and sentenced to fifteen years' penal servitude. Seven years and seven months of this sentence he endured. He was then, on December 19, 1877, released on ticket-of-leave.[1] He immediately rejoined the organisation, and ultimately became a member of

[1] Davitt had been engaged in collecting arms, and some 14,000 rounds of revolver cartridges and 400 Snider rifles were traced to him. Apropos of Davitt's release, the official of the Home Rule Confederation whom I have already quoted told me the following incident: 'There was a local Home Rule association called the "Westminster Home Rule Union." It was an association for the "respectable" members of the organisation who did not like to rub shoulders with Fenians and Fenian sympathisers. Of course, at the central office we were glad of the association; every association in league with us helped. One night I was at a meeting of the Westminster Union. Suddenly a Fenian named C—— popped in his head rather mysteriously, and popped it out again without saying anything. He returned in about ten minutes, and brought in a dark, delicate-looking young fellow of about thirty with him. "Here," he said, without any ceremony, "is Michael Davitt, who has just been released from Dartmoor." Well, the "respectables" were in a fix. They couldn't turn Davitt out, so they asked him to sit down. He and C—— stopped for about twenty minutes, and then went away. When they were gone some of the members of the Union said: "What the devil does that fellow C—— mean by coming in here and bringing this Davitt with him?" I said: "You need not turn up your nose at a man who has suffered seven years' penal servitude for Ireland whether you agree with him or not." They simply sneered. However, before many weeks these gentlemen were on the same platform with Davitt, and were loud in their praises of the man who had "suffered for Ireland." You see that is the way Fenianism colours our political movements and influences the most constitutional of us.'

the supreme council. Three other Fenians were released about the same time as Davitt—Sergeant McCarthy, Corporal Chambers, and John P. O'Brien. On January 5, 1878, all three returned to Ireland. They were met on their arrival at Kingstown by Parnell, O'Connor Power, and others.

The men received a great ovation on reaching Westland Row, and with the cheers for the 'political prisoners' were mingled cheers for 'Parnell.'

Parnell invited the four men to breakfast at Morrison's Hotel, where a tragic scene occurred. As Sergeant McCarthy, who had suffered much in prison, entered the room he was seen to grow faint and stagger. He was immediately helped to a sofa, where, in a few minutes, he died. Parnell was much shocked, but the tragedy served to increase the respect and sympathy which he always felt for those who did and dared for Ireland. McCarthy, like many another Fenian, had risked all, and lost all, for the faith that was in him.

CHAPTER VIII

THE NEW DEPARTURE

On January 14 and 15, 1878, another Home Rule conference was held in Dublin, in the hope of closing the widening breach between Butt and Parnell.

Butt once more condemned the policy of obstruction, and Parnell once more defended it. An extract from the speech of each will suffice.

Mr. Butt. 'I took the liberty some time ago at Limerick to lay down what I believed was the policy to pursue, and that was to make an assault all along the whole line of English misgovernment, and to bring forward every grievance of Ireland, and to press the English House of Commons for their redress; and I believed, and believe it still, that if once we got liberal-minded Englishmen fairly to consider how they would redress the grievance of Irish misgovernment, they would come in the end to the conclusion that they had but one way of giving us good government, and that was by allowing us to govern ourselves.'

Parnell. 'If I refrain from asking the country to-day, by the voice of this conference, to adopt any particular line of action, or any particular policy, or to put any definite issue in reference to it before this conference, I do so solely because I am young, and can wait——'

Butt. 'Hear, hear.'

Parnell. 'And because I believe the country can also wait, and that the country which has waited so long can wait a little longer. Mr. Butt has very fairly explained the policy that he has carried out during the three or four years that this Parliament has lasted, and he has pointed to his speech at Limerick, in which he described his policy as one which was designed to make an attack on the whole line of English misgovernment in Ireland by laying bare the grievances under which Ireland suffers. He has also told us his belief that if he made it clear to Englishmen that we did really suffer under many unjust laws, that he would be able to induce fair-minded Englishmen to direct their attention to the redress of these grievances, and that he would be able to persuade them that the best way to redress our grievances would be to leave us to redress them ourselves. Now I gladly agree with Mr. Butt that it is very possible, and very probable, that he would be able to persuade a fair-minded Englishman in the direction that he has indicated; but still I do not think that the House of Commons is mainly composed of fair-minded Englishmen. If we had to deal with men who were capable of listening to fair arguments there would be every hope of success for the policy of Mr. Butt as carried out in past sessions; but we are dealing with political parties who really consider the interests of their political organisations as paramount, beyond every other consideration.'

This conference led to no practical results. Parnell, backed by the advanced men, stood to his guns, and Butt, ill-supported by the Moderates and broken in health, gradually gave up the struggle. Indeed, before the end of the year 1878 the young member for Meath

was virtually master of the situation. Almost immediately on the meeting of Parliament the Government took up the question of obstruction, and appointed a select committee to inquire into the subject of public business. Humorously enough, Parnell was placed on this committee. The chief criminal was not put into the dock; he took his seat among the judges, and from that vantage ground he cross-examined with much shrewdness and skill the Speaker, the Chairman of Committees, and other high authorities on parliamentary procedure. The sittings of the committee lasted from March until July, when a report was prepared on which the Government took action early in 1879.

Parnell drafted a report of his own, which, however, the committee refused to accept. In this report the member for Meath (*inter alia*) said: 'The Committee cannot shut their eyes to the fact that the House is composed of several different nationalities who sympathise little with the aspirations, and who understand less of the affairs, of each other. Considerable friction, heat, and ill-feeling is frequently engendered by the interference of members belonging to one nationality in the affairs of the others, with the result of delay, loss of time, and obstruction to the general progress of business. In addition, the affairs of Ireland and India are neglected, and the representatives of these two countries, if they attend the sittings of the House, find themselves in a position of enforced idleness, unless they occupy themselves with English affairs and so incur the risk of the ill-will of the majority of the House.'

Leaving the question of obstruction, I must now turn to Parnell's relation with Fenians during the year 1878. We have seen how X. formed the Home Rule

Confederation of Great Britain, drew some of the Fenians into it, and made Parnell president. The difficulties which X. had to encounter from the beginning in reconciling Fenianism with Parliamentarianism in any shape or form much increased in 1878. I shall, however, let him tell his story in his own way:

'I was always opposed by a party on the supreme council who wished to have nothing whatever to do with the Parliamentarians. They wished the Fenians to remain within their own lines, to go on collecting arms, drilling, keeping alive the separatist spirit, watching, waiting, preparing. They believed in a policy of open warfare. Parliamentarianism, they said, was bound, sooner or later, to undermine the secret movement. I had no objection to the policy of open warfare, but open warfare seemed a long way off, and here was a new field of activity, which ought not to be neglected. Our great idea was to keep the spirit of nationality alive. This could always be done by fighting England. In Parnell we had a man who hated England, and who was ready and able to fight her at every available point. I thought that such a man ought to be given his head. He had asked for a fair trial, and I felt he was entitled to it. However, in the spring of 1878 there was a crisis.

'The supreme council—which was the governing body of the Fenians on this side of the Atlantic—consisted of eleven members. It is an open secret that Kickham was a member of the supreme council, and the most important man among us. Well, Kickham was dead against any alliance with the Parliamentarians. He believed that contact with them was demoralising, and that Parliamentarianism was nothing more nor less than an Anglicising influ-

ence. In fact he did not think that the question was arguable. It is also an open secret that Biggar and Egan were members of the supreme council. The other names have not transpired, and accordingly cannot be published. In 1878 Kickham and those who thought with him determined to take action. They brought forward a resolution pledging the council to sever all connection with the parliamentary party. This resolution was carried by a majority of one. I immediately resigned. I said that I did not agree with the decision of the council, and as I wished to have a free hand I would retire. Biggar agreed with me, but refused to resign. Parnell advised him to resign. He said, "No, sir, I never withdraw from anything. Let them expel me." They did expel him. They also expelled Egan, and others who voted with me. I saw Parnell and told him what I had done. He said I acted quite rightly; that I could not very well remain a member of a body from which I had differed on a cardinal point.'

'Which would be the more accurate thing to say: that the Fenians helped, or did not help, the Parnell movement, so called, in the years following 1878?'

X. 'Oh, helped, certainly. The heads of the I. R. B. were against Parnell, but many of the rank and file went with him. That was just the cleverness of the man. He appreciated the energy and earnestness of the Fenians, but turned these qualities to the account of his own movement. He did not try to weaken the force of Fenianism, but he diverted it into a channel of his own choosing. Had he attempted to break up Fenianism he would have gone to pieces. He therefore leant on it; he walked on the verge of treason-felony, and so won the hearts of many of the rank and file.

He was always the master of himself, and ultimately became the master of us.

'In the spring of 1878, about the time I left the supreme council, the American Fenians sent an agent to London to discuss the question of united action with Parnell. But that part of the story belongs to the Clan-na-Gael. I can only speak of what happened between Parnell and the Clan by hearsay.'

The Clan-na-Gael, be it said, was the American branch of the Fenian organisation. The Clan had watched Parnell closely, and was interested in his operations. The question was what could be done with him. In the Clan-na-Gael, as in the I. R. B., there was a difference of opinion about the advisability of co-operating with the constitutional party. Some of the American leaders were heartily in sympathy with the supreme council of the I. R. B., and believed that it would be a mistake to come into touch with the Parliamentarians in any way. Parliamentarianism, they said, would fizzle out, as it had always fizzled out; and then, if Fenianism were not kept intact, the people would be left without any political organisation. Let Fenianism—which was based on Nationality, and on nothing but Nationality—keep itself to itself. That, briefly, was the position of the no-alliance party in the Clan-na-Gael. But there was another party, led mainly by Mr. John Devoy, who favoured combined action between the parliamentary and the revolutionary forces. Fenianism, they said, had kept itself to itself far too much all the time. It ought now to mingle with the public life of the country, to interest itself in everything which interested any section of the population. In the old days the farmers had held aloof from Fenianism. Why?

Because Fenianism had held aloof from them. The land question was a vital question ; the Fenians should not leave it wholly in the hands of the Constitutionalists. Every man would not become a Nationalist, because nationality was a high ideal. Most people were not influenced by high ideals. They were influenced by selfish considerations, and these considerations had, unfortunately, to be worked upon. If the Fenians helped the farmers, the farmers would help the Fenians. By co-operating, then, with the 'open movement,' by mingling in the public life of the country, by directing the current of agitation into channels favourable to Fenian expansion, the cause of nationality would best be served. Let the Fenians go into the constitutional movement and keep it on national lines. That was the true policy to follow.

'In the spring of 1878 one of the heads of the Clan-na-Gael, being in London, desired to bring about a meeting between Parnell and some of the Parliamentarians, and himself and some of the most influential among the Fenians. The meeting took place at the Clan-na-Gael man's lodgings in Craven Street, Strand. There were present Parnell, an Irish member (who, it may as well be said, was selected by the Fenians because he had never been a Fenian and was not open to the fatal fault in their eyes of having taken two conflicting oaths), the chief official of the supreme council, one of the three most prominent Fenians then living, and, of course, the Irish-American gentleman himself. What occurred that night was shortly this. Parnell was mostly silent, but certainly impressively so. The Fenian official scarcely spoke at all, and the Clan-na-Gael man said but little. All the talking, roughly speaking, was done by Parnell's colleague and the

prominent Fenian, with the result that after much argument things remained very much as they had been at the beginning, the M.P. producing little or no effect upon the possibly too uncompromising Fenian, and the Fenian probably producing no effect whatever on the M.P. In fact the chasm between them was too wide to be overleaped. What effect either, or anything that occurred, produced upon Parnell it would be hard to say; but most certainly Parnell, silent as he was, and possibly somewhat because of his silence, produced a very great effect upon everyone present. The Clan-na-Gael man met the M.P. some days after, and, no doubt, Parnell more than once. The prominent Fenian also had a long talk with Parnell some short time afterwards, without their coming any nearer to each other in policy, though then, as before and even after, this Fenian was strongly impressed by the striking personality of Parnell.'[1]

Parnell had, as we have seen, the strongest sympathies with Fenianism, but he was resolved not to be managed by the Fenians—nor, indeed, by any force whatever. He believed profoundly in Fenian help, but saw the danger of Fenianism swamping the constitutional movement. His policy was to keep Parliamentarianism well in front, and to mass the Revolutionists behind it. The Fenians were to be his reserves. He certainly had no objection to an alliance between Fenianism and Constitutionalism, but he was determined that he should be master of the alliance. 'A true revolutionary movement in Ireland,' he said publicly, 'should, in my opinion, partake both of a constitutional and illegal character. It should be both an open and a secret organisation, using the constitu-

[1] This account has been given to me by one who was present. Mr. "Martin" (*ante*, p. 65) was at this Craven Street meeting.

tion for its own purposes, but also taking advantage of its secret combination.' [1]

At this time another attempt was made to draw him into the ranks of the I. R. B. A Fenian agent was once more deputed to call on him, and ask him to join the organisation. He again refused firmly. 'I think,' he said, 'I can do good with the parliamentary machine. I mean to try it, at all events. Purely physical-force movements have always failed in Ireland.' The Fenian reminded him that purely constitutional movements had always failed too. Parnell agreed, saying: 'But I do not want to break up your movement. On the contrary, I wish it to go on. Collect arms, do everything that you are doing, but let the open movement have a chance too. We can both help each other, but I am sure I can be of more use in the open movement.' On another occasion he said to another Fenian: 'I am sure I can do something with the parliamentary machine. I cannot explain how I am going to do it, but I am quite satisfied I can do it. I see my way clearly.'

Despite the attitude of the leaders of the I. R. B., Parnell was gaining some influence over the rank and file of the society. I asked the official of the Home Rule Confederation of Great Britain from whom I have already quoted [2] how far the Fenians were helping the Home Rule movement in England in 1878 and 1879. He said: 'The leaders opposed us, but the rank and file were divided. Some supported us, others did nothing. When there was nothing particular doing, very few of the Fenians troubled themselves about us. But when there was something special afoot—a parliamentary election, a municipal

[1] *New York Herald*, January 2, 1880. [2] *Ante*, p. 145.

election, anything of that kind—then certainly many Fenians came in and helped us. They were full of energy; they were about the best workers we had. It always seemed to me that they could not help having a "go" at England whenever an opportunity of any kind offered; and they certainly felt that in fighting for a Home Rule candidate against a Unionist they were striking in some way against English authority in Ireland. I had rather a curious experience myself of the Fenians about this time. There was a working men's club composed entirely of Irish. I came in contact with the members, as I was always knocking up against Irishmen in London and other parts of England. These working men asked me to do some secretarial business for them—to keep their books, &c. I agreed, and used to attend their meetings occasionally. Looking through their books I found there was a fine lot of names, and they were a fine lot of fellows too, and I did not see why they should not join the Confederation. So one day I sent a circular to all the members of the club inviting them to join. Some time afterwards I went to the club as usual, but I was met with scowls. As every man dropped in he looked at me askance and suspiciously. I could see that I was in some sort of disgrace, but I could not make out what it was all about. At last one of them got up and said: "What I suspected has happened. I was against Mr. —— coming in here and doing anything for us. He is a Home Rule agent, and I knew he would be interfering with us. I am as thankful to him as anyone here for the work he has done for our club. But we are not Home Rulers. We are Fenians, and we do not want to be interfered with, that's all." The circular was the cause of the whole row. I expressed

regret for sending it, said I thought there was no harm, and so forth. The upshot of the whole business was that, after mutual explanations, they asked me still to come and help in the business of the club, but to leave Home Rule alone. This I did. But whenever there was an election on, or whenever there was fighting to be done, I used to ask these men to give me a hand, and they always did. They did not join the Confederation, but they gave us outside help, and we got lots of assistance from Fenians in that way.'

An ex-Fenian who had suffered in the cause also throws some light on the effect produced by Parnell's vigorous parliamentary action. He says: 'When I came out of prison I went back at once to the organisation. I began to collect arms, to conceal them, to organise. Then my attention was turned to what was going on in Parliament, and to Parnell chiefly. This was something new. Here was a handful of men fighting the British Government on its own ground. People do not become Revolutionists for the fun of the thing. Every Fenian carried his life in his hand. There is not much fun in that. Why were we Fenians? Because in Fenianism was the only hope for Ireland. Parliamentarianism had always been contemptible. It was worse, it was mischievous. The London Parliament was simply a school for Anglicising Irishmen. We hated the thing. But if there were the slightest chance of getting an Irish Parliament by constitutional means, the vast majority of Fenians would be Constitutionalists. A real Irish Parliament, not a sham, would have satisfied the great majority of our people all the time. But we saw no chance of getting an Irish Parliament or anything else by constitutional

means, and we became Revolutionists. But here was a new departure. Here was a new man with new methods. There was no chance of English society seizing him, for he was making himself detestable to all Englishmen. Ought he not to get a trial, ought not his methods to get a trial? That is what I thought, and as the years passed Parnell impressed me more and more with his power, and ultimately I left the Fenian organisation and joined him.'

While, then, the Fenian mind in Ireland and America was much exercised by Parnell's manœuvres, Michael Davitt landed in New York in August 1878. Why had he gone? First, to visit his mother at Philadelphia; secondly, to meet the members of the Clanna-Gael, and to discuss the political situation generally. Davitt was still a Fenian; but there can be no doubt that he was gradually, perhaps unconsciously, drifting away from the movement. He took a keen interest in the land question.[1] He had come from the peasant

[1] I have elsewhere given some account of the relation between landlord and tenant in Ireland, and may here repeat what I have written. 'The tenant, "scrambling for the potato" and left without any resource but the land, offered an exorbitant rent, which the landlord accepted and exacted to the uttermost farthing. Freedom of contract between landlord and tenant there was none. The tenant came into the market under circumstances which left him entirely at the mercy of the landlord. The "bit of land" meant life to him, the want of it death; for in the absence of commercial industries the people were thrown upon the land mainly for existence. "The treaty between landlord and tenant [in Ireland]," says Mr. Nassau Senior, "is not a calm bargain, in which the tenant, having offered what he thinks the land worth, cares little whether his offer is accepted or not; it is a struggle, like the struggle to buy bread in a besieged town, or to buy water in an African caravan." In truth, the landlord had a monopoly of the means of existence, and he used it for his own aggrandisement, regardless of the tenant's fate or the public weal. "The landlords in Ireland," said Lord Donoughmore in 1854, "have been in the habit of letting land, not farms." Never has a happier description of the Irish land system been given than this. The landlord let "land"—a strip of bog, barren, wild, dreary. The tenant reclaimed it, drained, fenced, reduced the waste to a cultivated state, made the "land" a "farm." Then the landlord

class; he felt their wrongs acutely, and longed to right them. He has sometimes been credited with the invention of what came to be called the 'new departure,' the combined action of Constitutionalists and Revolutionists for the common purpose of national independence. But the fact is the 'new departure' was in the air before Davitt arrived in America. James O'Kelly, John Devoy, and others had been thinking it out while Davitt was in jail. 'Had Davitt come to America in the beginning of 1877,' said a member of the Clan-na-Gael to me, 'he would have found a few men ready to discuss the new departure and to favour it. But neither he nor we could have dared broach it at a public meeting of the clan. But a change had taken place in a twelvemonth. Parnell's action in Parliament had made people think that something might be done with the Parliamentarians after all. Parliamentarianism was apparently becoming a respectable thing. It might be possible to touch it without becoming contaminated. Parnell had, in fact, made the running for Davitt, and Davitt arrived in New York just in the nick of time. Many influential members of the Clan were full of the notion of an alliance with the Constitutional party, and were now ready to co-operate with Davitt in bringing it about.' Davitt had, of course,

pounced upon him for an increased rent. The tenant could not pay; his resources had been exhausted in bringing the bog into a state of cultivation, he had not yet recouped himself for his outlay and labour. He was evicted, flung on the roadside to starve, without receiving one shilling compensation for his outlay on the land, and the "farm" which he had made was given to another at an enhanced rental. What did the evicted tenant do? He entered a Ribbon Lodge, told the story of his wrong, and demanded vengeance on the man whom he called a tyrant and an oppressor. Only too often his story was listened to and vengeance was wreaked on the landlord, or the new tenant; and sometimes on both. This is briefly the dismal story of the land trouble in Ireland.'—*Thomas Drummond, Life and Letters.*

seen Parnell before he started for America, and Parnell knew that he would see the leaders of the Clan-na-Gael. But the cautious member for Meath gave him no code of instructions, and sent no message to the Clan, as has sometimes been suggested. That was not Parnell's way of doing business. He never wished to know too much, and was at all events careful not to let others into the secret of his knowledge, whatever it might be. On arriving at New York one of the first men whom Davitt met was John Devoy—the champion of the new departure in the Clan-na-Gael. Devoy was a Revolutionist. He wished to draw the farmers into the revolutionary movement; and believed this could be done by making agrarian reform a plank in the national platform. Devoy and Davitt agreed at once on a common programme and worked together as one man to carry it out; 'the land of Ireland,' to use the words of Davitt, 'was to be made the basis of Irish nationality.'

In September both men attended a large public meeting, composed chiefly of members of the Clan-na-Gael, in New York, when the following resolutions, proposed by Devoy, were carried:

'1. That we deem the present a fitting opportunity to proclaim our conviction of Ireland's right to an independent national existence. That as Ireland has never forfeited her right to independence, and as no action on the part of England has given any justification for the acceptance of the Union, we hereby protest against all attempts at compromise, and renew our resolve to work for the complete overthrow of British domination.

'2. That the landlord system forced on the Irish people by English legislation is a disgrace to humanity

and to the civilisation of the present century. It is the direct cause of the expatriation of millions of the Irish race, and of the miserable condition of the Irish peasantry. That as the land of Ireland belongs to the people of Ireland, the abolition of the foreign landlord system and the substitution of one by which the tiller of the soil will be fixed permanently upon it, and holding directly of the State, is the only true solution of the Irish land question, which an Irish Republic can alone effect.'

A month later Devoy and Davitt attended another public meeting in New York, when the former advocated the policy of the new departure in a vigorous speech. He said: 'I claim that by the adoption of a proper public policy and a vigorous propaganda the Nationalists can sweep away the men who misrepresent us [the followers of Butt chiefly] and obtain control of the public voice of the country. Every public body in the country, from the little boards of poor-law guardians and land commissioners to the city corporations and members of Parliament, should be controlled by the National [the Fenian] party, and until it is able to control them it will be looked upon by foreigners as a powerless and insignificant faction. . . . Now I believe in Irish independence, but I don't believe it would be worth while to free Ireland if that foreign landlord system were left standing. I am in favour of sweeping away every vestige of the English connection, and this accursed landlord system above all and before all. But while I think it is right to proclaim this, and that the national party should proclaim that nothing less than this would satisfy it, I know it is a solution that cannot be reached in a day, and therefore I think we should in the meantime accept all measures tending to the

prevention of arbitrary eviction, and the creation of a peasant proprietary as a step in the right direction.'

This was the policy of John Devoy. This was the policy of the New Departure. The Fenians were to have a hand in everything that was going on, and 'above and before all' they were to have a hand in the land question. Agrarian reform or agrarian revolution was to be made the stepping-stone to separation from England. Devoy did not believe in Home Rule. But he did not wish to raise the separatist flag publicly. He suggested that the limits of national independence should not be defined. Let 'self-government' and 'self-government' only be demanded. Then the Fenians could co-operate cordially with the Constitutionalists. Each section could put its own construction on the meaning of the words.

Devoy succeeded in carrying many of the leaders of the Clan-na-gael with him on these lines, and in October 1878 he despatched a cablegram to Parnell, setting out the terms of alliance between the Revolutionists and the Constitutionalists; the cablegram ran as follows: 'The Nationalists here will support you on the following conditions:

'First. Abandonment of the Federal demand and substitution of a general declaration in favour of self-government.

'Second. Vigorous agitation of the land question on the basis of a peasant proprietary, while accepting concessions tending to abolition of arbitrary eviction.

'Third. Exclusion of all sectarian issues from the platform.

'Fourth. Irish members to vote together on all Imperial and Home Rule questions, adopt an aggressive policy, and energetically resist coercive legislation.

'Fifth. Advocacy of all struggling nationalities in the British Empire and elsewhere.' [1]

These were the terms offered by the Clan-na-gael to Parnell in October 1878.

What did Parnell do? He never answered the cablegram. The Clan had shown its hand. Parnell declined to show his. Devoy, a man of remarkable energy and grit, was not, however, discouraged. In December he addressed a letter to the 'Freeman s Journal'—the Home Rule organ in Dublin—still further expounding his policy, and practically urging the union of Constitutionalists and Revolutionists for the common purpose, however veiled, of undermining English authority in Ireland. Towards the end of the year he sailed for Europe, resolved to deal with the Irish situation on the spot.

But to return to Parnell. He had now an established position in Parliament. He was a power in the House. The skill and ability which he displayed on the committee appointed to inquire into the subject of obstruction won the admiration of his most inveterate enemies, and even English publicists wrote that if Parnell would only apply himself seriously to public affairs he would soon become a valuable citizen. Of course there was obstruction during the session of 1878, but there were fewer of those 'scenes' which had characterised the manœuvres of 1877. Butt had said that the policy of obstruction would prevent useful legislation for Ireland. This prophecy, however, was destined to be falsified, for in 1878 an important Irish measure became law—the Intermediate Education Bill.[2]

[1] The cablegram was signed by Devoy, Dr. Carroll, Breslin, General Millin, and Patrick Mahon.

[2] A Board, called the 'Intermediate Education Board of Ireland,' was

Parnell also scored a success by causing the Mutiny Bill—which he again obstructed—to be referred to a select committee, a step which was followed by important reforms in the ensuing session. Altogether he had already proved to the House and to the country that he was a man with a future.

Outside Parliament he devoted himself industriously to the cause of Home Rule. As President of the Home Rule Confederation of Great Britain he attended regularly at the meetings of the executive body, and took a leading part in the transaction of its business.

'Parnell was an excellent chairman,' says the official of the Confederation on whose information I have already drawn. 'He used to rattle through the business with great speed. Faith, he allowed no obstruction in our work.'

'Was he as pleasant a man to do business with as Butt?'

Official. 'There was a great difference between them. Butt was genial and lovable. You did not feel you were doing business with him at all. I used often to go to his lodgings in London. He always received you with open arms; sat you down to a cup of tea, or a glass of whisky punch, and chatted away as if you had only called to spend a social evening. He was a delightful companion, so friendly, and so homely. He would crack a joke, tell a good story, and gossip away in the happiest style. I quite loved the old man. But Parnell was altogether different. He was certainly a very pleasant man to do business with, very quick at

formed for the purpose of holding examinations and granting exhibitions and prizes to students who passed in subjects of secondary education. A sum of 1,000,000*l.*, taken from the Irish Church surplus, was devoted to the objects of the Board.

seeing a thing, very ready to show the way out of a difficulty, courteous, agreeable, making the most of what you did and the least of what he did himself. If he differed from you it was in the mildest way, and he always put his points as if it were for you and not for him to decide. "Don't you think it would be better?" "Suppose we say so-and-so," that was his formula. But, pleasant and even charming as he could be, you always felt that there was a piece of ice between you and him. I used to go to his apartment as I went to Butt's, but we never had a glass of punch together or even a cup of tea. It was business all the time. Occasionally he would take a strong line, but very seldom However, when he said "That cannot be done," one knew there was an end of the discussion. I remember on one occasion reading a report for the executive when Parnell was in the chair. I stated in the report that the Catholic clergy in England gave the Confederation a good deal of trouble, because they tried to make the Irish vote Tory. The English priests did did not care about Home Rule, they only cared about education, and as the Tories were more with them on that subject than the Liberals, they went Tory, and wanted to bring our people with them. As soon as I had read the paragraph he said, "I'm not going to fight the Church." There was some dissent, but Parnell was very firm, though smiling and rather chaffing us all the time. But the paragraph went out. That was Parnell's policy. He would not fight with any Irish force. His aim was to bring all Irish forces into line. He would no more fight with the Church than he would with the Fenians. Parnell never talked freely with me or with anyone, so far as I could make out. The only time I ever heard him make any attempt at

conversation was when someone introduced the subject of mechanics. Then he started off, greatly to my surprise, talking in a lively way, and giving us a lot of information about mechanics. Then someone referred to politics, and he stopped in an instant. He would never talk politics unless something had to be done.'

I asked an Irish member, who had been a Fenian, on one occasion, if Parnell had been forced to quarrel either with the Fenians or the Church, which it would be? He said: 'The Church, for Parnell liked the Fenians, but he did not like the Church. He knew, however, the power of the Church, and he wished unquestionably to have a great conserving force like it at his back. Parnell would never quarrel with the Church unless the Church forced the quarrel, there can be no doubt of that.'

Butt was now breaking fast. One remembers how in the session of 1878 he moved about the House careworn and dejected. He felt that the ground was slipping beneath his feet. He knew the time was gone when he could hope to lead a united Irish party to victory. The dissensions among the Parliamentarians were fatal to his command, if they were not, in truth, fatal to the triumph of the Home Rule cause itself. All these things he saw clearly, and he was bowed down with sorrow and despair. In April he addressed a manifesto to the electors of Limerick, condemning the policy of obstruction, pointing out the disasters which he believed it would bring on the Home Rule cause, pleading ill-health as a reason for retirement, and formally announcing his resignation of the leadership. But his followers urged him to reconsider his decision, and ultimately he withdrew his resignation. The breach, however, between him and Parnell remained

as wide as ever. In October the Home Rule Confederation of Great Britain held its annual meeting in Dublin. Butt objected to this proceeding. The organisation, he felt, ought to confine its operations to the other side of the channel. But the Confederation had come to Dublin for a special reason. By the Convention Act of 1793 no meeting attended by delegates could be held in Ireland. 'But,' the leaders of the Confederation argued, 'we shall hold our meeting in Dublin, and we shall summon delegates from England, and then we shall present to the Irish and the English public the extraordinary spectacle of an Irish organisation with its headquarters in England summoning delegates from England to sit in the Irish capital, while no organisation in Ireland can summon delegates from Ireland for the same purpose; and if that does not kill the Convention Act we don't know what will.' I cannot say whether this manœuvre did kill the Convention Act, but, as a matter of fact, it was repealed the next year.

Efforts were still made to bring about a *modus vivendi* between Butt and Parnell, but in vain. 'You are in rebellion,' said Professor Galbraith to Parnell. 'Yes,' was the answer; 'but in justifiable rebellion.' 'I do not want *you* to become an obstructive,' he said to Butt; 'I do not want anyone to become an obstructive; but there must be a vigorous policy. I am young and active, and I cannot be kicking my heels about the English House of Commons doing nothing. Englishmen will not give me an opportunity of concerning myself about the affairs of my own country, and I mean to concern myself about the affairs of their country.'

'Butt,' he said on another occasion, 'is hopeless.

He is too much under the English influence. He wants to please the English. But you may be sure that when we are pleasing the English we are not winning. We must not care for English opinion. We must go right on in the way Ireland wants.' 'There is a great force in England,' he said, addressing the Confederation in Dublin. 'A British force,' cried a voice in the crowd. 'No,' retorted Parnell, amid tremendous cheers, 'an Irish force. We must,' he urged, 'see that the Irish in England think only of Ireland and vote only for Ireland, and that they make English candidates vote for Ireland too. I said when I was last on this platform that I would not promise anything by parliamentary action, nor any particular line of policy; but I said we could help you to punish the English, and I predicted that the English would very soon get afraid of the policy of punishment.'

It was at this time suggested to Parnell that he ought to address more meetings in Ireland. 'Ah,' he said; 'but I have not an independent platform.'

'If I get up a meeting for you, will you come to it?' said a friend. 'Certainly,' answered Parnell. A great meeting—a land meeting—was organised in Tralee. Parnell addressed it in November. He made a vigorous speech, saying plainly enough that nothing short of a revolution would bring about a change in the land laws, and urging the establishment of a tribunal for fixing rents, and the creation of a peasant proprietary. 'It will take an earthquake to settle the land question, Mr. Parnell,' someone said to him. 'Then we must have an earthquake' was the reply.

CHAPTER IX

THE LAND LEAGUE

Devoy arrived in Ireland about January 1879. He was soon joined by Davitt, who had preceded him across the Atlantic. No one played a more important part in Irish politics at this crisis than Michael Davitt. He was still a Fenian. He was even yet a member of the supreme council of the I. R. B. He possessed the confidence of the Fenians in America. He was in touch with Parnell. In a word, he was the connecting-link between the American Revolutionists and the extreme wing of the constitutional party; the very pivot on which the 'new departure' turned.

The time was ripe for the plans of the Neo-Fenians. The land agitation had already commenced, 'Tenants' Defence Associations' had been formed in various parts of the country, and public attention was fixed on the subject. Distress accompanied discontent, and both causes combined to excite and influence the peasantry. Rents could not be paid, and non-payment of rent was followed by eviction. Landlords were unreasonable, tenants were exasperated, and soon the flame of agitation was fanned in every part of the country. I have already said that the Land Act of 1870 had proved a failure. It had been passed to prevent arbitrary evic-

tions and to secure to industrious tenants compensation for improvements, and in certain cases for disturbance. But it neither effected the one purpose nor the other. The power of the landlords remained practically unchecked. Between 1876 and 1879 Bills had been introduced to make the legislation of 1870 a reality. But they were rejected in the House of Commons. The Irish tenants saw at last that the Irish members could not help them, and they resolved to help themselves.

Devoy had come to Ireland with the view of bringing about an alliance between Revolutionists and Constitutionalists for the common purpose of undermining English authority in the island. The land question, he felt, was the basis on which that authority rested. The overthrow of the land system was accordingly, from his standpoint, a matter of paramount importance. Davitt was also in favour of separation, but nevertheless looked upon landlordism as an evil in itself, which ought, apart from all other considerations, to be swept utterly away. Both men now saw that a *bonâ-fide* land agitation had, without any reference whatever to their aims, commenced; and the question was, how could it be turned to the account of the separatist movement?

Devoy had two interviews with Parnell in the presence of Davitt. The member for Meath was as usual cautious, and took good care not to give himself away. He entered into no compact with Devoy, but listened to all that Devoy had to tell him about the Clan-na-Gael. The furthermost extent to which he went was to ask, as he had on previous occasions asked, for time to work the parliamentary machine. He did not mind letting Devoy see his antipathy to

England and his sympathy with the Fenians. But he entered into no understanding with the Clan.

At a meeting of the supreme council of the I. R. B. in Paris, when the question of the 'new departure' was fully discussed, Kickham was present, and offered a vehement opposition to it. He regarded it as dishonest and immoral, and denounced Devoy in vigorous language. Kickham, it should be said, was very deaf, and could only be approached through a speaking-trumpet. As he proceeded in his condemnation of Devoy's scheme, Devoy and Davitt tried now and again to get at the trumpet and to put in a word in reply; but Kickham waved them off. He carried the council with him; in fact Devoy and Davitt found only one supporter in that body. One point, however, Devoy gained. It was agreed that, while no alliance should be entered into between the supreme council and the Parliamentarians, 'the officers of the organisation should be left free to take part in the open movement if they felt so disposed—such officers to be held responsible for acts or words deemed to be injurious to the revolutionary cause.'[1]

Devoy now sailed for America, where, in defiance of the supreme council of the I. R. B., he threw himself heart and soul into the work of the 'new departure'; and Davitt stayed in Ireland to co-operate cordially and vigorously at his end with the American Fenians.

Meanwhile the land agitation grew apace. In Connaught, Davitt's province, the pinch of poverty was most sorely felt, and Connaught became the centre of disturbance.

On April 20 a great land meeting was held in

[1] This permission was withdrawn in 1880. Davitt attended no more meetings of the supreme council.

Irishtown, County Mayo. Three Fenians besides Davitt attended, and they were unquestionably the ablest and most energetic men present. There is little use in mincing words over these transactions now. Official Fenianism in Ireland held aloof from the land agitation. But that agitation would probably have never reached the formidable proportions it assumed had not individual Fenians flung themselves into it with characteristic earnestness and daring.[1] The 'Land League Fenians' were, no doubt, ultimately expelled from their own body; but they carried into the new movement the fire and energy of the old, unchastened and unrestrained, however, by that purer spirit of nationality which animated the founders of the Fenian organisation.

At the Irishtown meeting was struck the spark which soon set Ireland in a blaze. But before the conflagration had yet spread throughout the land Isaac Butt, perhaps fittingly, passed away. In July 1878 he felt seriously alarmed about his health, and wrote to his medical adviser and friend, Dr. O'Leary:

'United Hotel, Charles Street, St. James's,
'July 4, 1878.

'My dear O'Leary,—You have always shown such kindness and care to me that I would like you to know every little thing that happens to me. I am not happy about myself. Yesterday I crossed over in a good passage. I laid down the latter half of the way. Before getting up I felt an uneasy sensation at my heart, with something like palpitation. Getting up I

[1] The freedom given to the Fenian officers at the Paris meeting was of course, very useful to Devoy and Davitt; the reason, no doubt, why it was taken away in 1880.

had difficulty in breathing, nearly as great as I used to have at Buxton on the night I came over with you. It has continued more or less ever since. My journey to the sitting-room here—you know the length—has been a series of relays and pantings, and all this is accompanied by vagueness in my trains of thought. Now surely, my dear friend, it is useless to say that this is of no consequence. Is it not better to accept the truth that it is the knell of the curfew telling us the hour is come when the fire must be put out and the light quenched? If not, is it not at least something that requires more care than you or I or Butcher have given it? In other respects I am improving. You will see in this letter that my hand is steadier, but does not this give to these symptoms a worse character? I have observed latterly that in writing I very frequently omit a word, far oftener the syllables or letters of a word. When half-an-hour in bed last night I had lost all recollection of where I was, or how I came to be where I was. I had great difficulty in settling to myself whether the change from Irish to English time made my watch fast or slow. Is it not through the want of blood to feed the action of the brain, or is it only congestion of the ganglionic nerves? Do not laugh at this, tell me honestly, and as a true, because a candid, friend what you think. I will go to Quain to-morrow, but I fear this is of no use. I have taken a strange notion in my head. I would like to consult a perfect stranger who does not know me, and see what he would say. If I were to carry out this perverse notion, who would be the best man to select? Can I depend on you to tell me the truth? I will write to you to-morrow what Quain says. I am afraid I must stay here until the Education Bill passes. If I

go over I must come back again. I will know to-morrow what I will do.

'Yours ever sincerely,

'ISAAC BUTT.'

Parnell and Butt came into conflict for the last time on February 5, 1879. It was at a public meeting in the Leinster Lecture Hall, Molesworth Street, Dublin. The old question of obstruction was again discussed. Butt again condemned the tactics of the forward party, and Parnell spoke once more of the inaction of Butt. Issue was joined on the following resolution, proposed by Mr. T. D. Sullivan and seconded by Mr. Biggar:

'That this meeting highly approves of the declarations made by Mr. Butt at the National Conference of November 1873, to the following effect: that "the more every Irish member keeps aloof from all private communications with English ministers or English parties the better;" that "there is enmity between the English Government and the Irish nation;" and that "the representatives of the people must accept this position;" that "they should hold no private parley with the power which is at war with the Irish people, and with which, therefore, the Irish members should be at war." That this meeting respectfully but earnestly recommends all the Home Rule representatives to act in the spirit of the foregoing declarations, and re-affirms (as specially applicable to the present time) the following resolution adopted by the National Conference held in the Rotunda on January 15, 1878: "That, in view of the present circumstances, we think it desirable in the interests of the Home Rule cause that more energetic action should be taken in Parlia-

ment, and we therefore impress upon the Home Rule members the necessity of increased activity and more regular attendance during the ensuing session.'' '

Butt defended his policy with much of the old fire and eloquence, and succeeded in defeating the resolution by eight votes.[1]

He was gratified with the result and left the hall in his usual genial pleasant way, leaning on the arm of a member of the 'forward' party. He never appeared on the political stage again. A short time afterwards he fell seriously ill, and on May 13 sank peacefully to rest.

The founder of the Home Rule movement has to some extent been overshadowed by the remarkable man who was so near bringing that movement to a successful issue. Nevertheless, Isaac Butt will always stand in the front rank of the Irish political leaders of the nineteenth century.

On the collapse of Fenianism there was every danger that Ireland would sink into the slough of Whiggery. From any danger of such a calamity he saved her. He created a great national movement, and led it with conspicuous ability and in a true spirit of chivalry. Under his command Ireland sent sixty Home Rule members to the House of Commons, the Irish vote in England was organised, and many English parliamentary candidates were constrained to take the Home Rule pledge. He had, however, the defects of his qualities. He was a scrupulous constitutional leader,

[1] Technically, the division was taken on an amendment, proposed by Mr. D. B. Sullivan, to the effect that all reference to Mr. Butt should be omitted, and that merely the resolution passed at the conference of 1878 should be re-affirmed.

and instinctively shrank from revolutionary methods. He revered representative institutions, and revolted against all proceedings calculated to bring them into contempt. No Englishman respected the House of Commons more than Isaac Butt, and he fought the advanced section of his own party in defence of that venerable institution.

'No man,' he said, addressing a meeting in Dublin in January 1879, 'can damage the authority of the House of Commons without damaging the cause of representative government and of freedom all over the world.'

It was a misfortune for which he certainly was not to blame that, while the House of Commons influenced him, he did not influence the House of Commons. He appealed to the reason and justice of Englishmen, but the English did not respond to the appeal. He was a loyal citizen of the empire, but his loyalty did not get him a hearing. He kept the agitation within the limits of the law, respected the opinions and feelings of opponents, the conventions of society. But no Englishman took him seriously. 'Do you really mean Home Rule?' an old Whig said to him one day in the Four Courts, Dublin. 'Indeed I do,' he answered, with genial earnestness. The old Whig smiled and walked away. No one ever asked Parnell if he meant Home Rule. There were those who thought that he meant a great deal more.

And what was Parnell? A Revolutionist working with constitutional weapons. We have seen what Butt said of the House of Commons. What said Parnell? 'I said when I was last here [in Dublin] that I would not promise anything by parliamentary action, nor by any particular line of policy; but I said we could

punish the English, and I predicted that the English would very soon get afraid of punishment.'

Nothing can better show the chasm which separated the two men in thought and feeling than these two sentences. Yet the House of Commons despised Butt; and Parnell became the greatest figure in it, in his day, with a single exception.

I have said that Butt was a constitutional agitator. He was also a great advocate. And if pure advocacy —able, earnest, courteous—could have won the Irish cause he would have succeeded. It could not, and he failed hopelessly.

Constitutional agitation, strictly speaking, disappeared with Butt. Revolutionary agitation followed. Davitt preached the new departure in public and in private, visited the most distressed and disaffected districts, and swept all the Fenians he could into the new movement. On June 7 another great land meeting, organised by Davitt and the local Fenians, though of course attended by thousands of tenant farmers who were not Fenians, was held at Westport, County Mayo. Parnell was invited. He hesitated, for he had not yet gauged the force of the agrarian agitation. His attention was probably first seriously directed to the subject in the course of a conversation with Kickham, the date of which I cannot give. 'Do you think, Mr. Kickham,' he asked, 'that the people feel very keenly on the land question?' 'Feel keenly on the land question?' answered Kickham. 'I am only sorry to say that I think they would go to hell for it.' Finally Parnell resolved to accept the invitation of the Westport men. The Archbishop of Tuam, who saw something besides land in the new movement, condemned the meeting, and indirectly

warned Parnell not to come. But he came, and delivered a stirring speech, which was long remembered by friends and foes.

'A fair rent is a rent a tenant can reasonably pay according to the times; but in bad times the tenant cannot be expected to pay as much as he did in good times, three or four years ago. If such rents are insisted upon a repetition of the scenes of 1847 and 1848 will be witnessed. Now, what must we do in order to induce the landlords to see the position? You must show the landlords that you intend to hold a firm grip on your homesteads and lands. You must not allow yourselves to be dispossessed as you were dispossessed in 1847. You must not allow your small holdings to be turned into large ones. I am not supposing that the landlords will remain deaf to the voice of reason, but I hope they may not, and that on those properties on which the rents are out of all proportion to the times that a reduction may be made, and that immediately. If not, you must help yourselves, and the public opinion of the world will stand by you and support you in your struggle to defend your homesteads. I should be deceiving you if I told you that there was any use in relying upon the exertions of the Irish members of Parliament on your behalf. I think that if your members were determined and resolute they could help you, but I am afraid they won't. I hope that I may be wrong, and that you may rely upon the constitutional action of your parliamentary representatives in this the sore time of your need and trial; but above all things remember that God helps him who helps himself, and that by showing such a public spirit as you have shown here to-day, by coming in your thousands in the face of every difficulty, you will do more to show the land-

lords the necessity of dealing justly with you than if you had 150 Irish members in the House of Commons.'

Davitt also made a rattling speech, full of defiance and rebellion.

The fire spread, and the Government did nothing to put it out. They did not concede, they did not coerce. They listened neither to tenants nor to landlords. They unwittingly gave Davitt his head. With a little wisdom and foresight the fire might have been quenched at the outset. But the Irish Secretary—Mr. James Lowther—was ignorant, indifferent, incapable, and he faithfully represented English statesmanship in Ireland. On June 26 the question of agricultural distress in Ireland was brought before the House of Commons by Mr. O'Connor Power. He was treated with disdain by Mr. Lowther, and literally howled down by the Tories. Here is the official account of the scene.

'From the time when the hon. member stated his intention to move the adjournment of the House, and it appeared probable that a debate was about to be raised, hon. members ceased to pay any attention to the hon. member's remarks, and conversation became so general and so loud that the hon. member could with difficulty be heard.'[1]

So disgraceful were these interruptions that Mr. John Bright felt himself constrained to intervene and to sharply rebuke the Irish Secretary and his unmannerly followers. Nothing, of course, was done. The Government had not the most remote notion of what was brewing in Ireland; not the faintest conception that by neglecting the demands of the farmers

[1] *Hansard*, 3rd series, vol. ccxlvii. p. 696.

they were throwing the country into the hands of the Revolutionists.

Other work now lay ready to Parnell's hands in the House of Commons. I have said that in 1878 a committee was appointed to consider the subject of obstruction. Early in 1879 Sir Stafford Northcote gave notice of six resolutions for dealing with the question; but he had to abandon them all except one, which proved of little use. The object of this resolution was to prevent members from discussing various miscellaneous grievances before the House went into Committee of Supply. The House was kept for three nights discussing this single resolution, and in the end amendments were added which much weakened its force.

So far all attempts to deal with obstruction had failed, as Parnell showed when the Army Discipline Bill came up for consideration. Over this Bill—or rather over one subject included in it, flogging in the army—the fight of the session took place.

We have seen that Parnell had opposed and obstructed the Mutiny Bills in 1877 because the Government would not abolish flogging. In 1878 he returned to the charge, succeeded in getting the Bills referred to a select committee, and wrung from the Government a pledge that before they were brought in again an amended Army Bill would be introduced. In 1879 this pledge was redeemed, and the Army Discipline and Regulation Bill was introduced. The new measure contained a clause retaining the punishment of flogging. Parnell opposed the clause. In 1877 and 1878 he and his band of obstructives stood almost alone in their opposition to the 'cat.' Now they were supported by a crowd of English Radicals. Parnell wisely allowed

these Radicals to take the lead. On May 20 Mr. Hopwood opened operations by moving an amendment abolishing flogging altogether. He was supported by Parnell and the Irish, opposed by Sir William Harcourt (who asked what punishment could be substituted for flogging), and beaten by fifty-six votes. On June 10 Parnell stepped to the front, moving an amendment which was technically in order, but which practically raised the question which had, in fact, been settled by vote on May 20. 'I was asked the other night,' he said, 'by the hon. member for Oxford (Sir William Harcourt) what punishment could be substituted for flogging. I could not answer the question at the time. I have since consulted military authorities, and I can answer it now.' He then suggested alternative punishments; but his amendment was defeated by forty-three votes. Mr. Hopwood next came forward once more, moving that the number of lashes should be reduced from twenty to six. Parnell and the obstructives supported. The amendment was still under consideration when the House met on June 17—in some respects the most eventful night of the debate. Mr. Chamberlain now interposed, condemning flogging as 'unnecessary and immoral,' and calling upon the Government to put in a schedule specifying the offences for which it was to be inflicted. Sir William Harcourt supported this demand. Then John Bright, in a short but powerful speech, urged the Minister of War, Colonel Stanley, to show a spirit of conciliation, and to reduce the number of lashes from fifty to twenty-five at the least. This suggestion[1] was accepted, Hopwood withdrawing his amendment in favour of

[1] Bright's suggestion later on moved as an amendment by Mr. Brown.

it. Nevertheless the battle of the 'cat' was not yet over. Mr. Hopwood immediately moved that the punishment should be inflicted by a 'cat' with one tail, instead of a 'cat' with nine tails. Lord Hartington opposed this amendment, which was defeated by 110 votes. An Irish member, Mr. Callan, next proposed that a specimen of the 'cat' should be exhibited in the Library. 'Yes,' said Parnell, fastening upon this suggestion, 'I should like to see what sort of an instrument is to be used, for I understand there are several kinds.' The Government would not, however, gratify the curiosity either of Mr. Callan or Parnell. Other amendments were now proposed, and on June 19 Parnell once more appealed to the Government to abolish the cat. 'Let us,' he said, 'as this day's work abolish flogging. If you do that I will wash my hands of the Bill and give you no further trouble.'

'No,' said Sir William Harcourt, supported by Ministers; 'as the Bill now stands (with Bright's amendment) it is satisfactory, and when the schedule asked for by the hon. member for Birmingham (Chamberlain) is put in we may feel content.'

'I will not accept the advice of the hon. member for Oxford,' said Mr. Chamberlain with much warmth; 'he is far too favourable to this Bill. Nothing can be done without obstruction,' he added, and then wound up with this compliment to Parnell: 'I will only add before I sit down that the friends of humanity and the friends of the British army owe a debt of gratitude to my hon. friend the member for Meath for standing up alone against this system of flogging when I myself, and other members, had not the courage of our convictions. The hon. member had opposed

flogging in the Mutiny Bill, but unsuccessfully; he had opposed it unsuccessfully in the Prisons Bill; but now he raises the question again, and I hope his efforts will be crowned with success.'[1]

Parnell, with characteristic tenacity, had never lost sight of Mr. Callan's suggestion that specimens of the 'cat' should be exhibited in the Library. 'I should like to know,' he said, 'what the Government knows about these "cats." I have a shrewd suspicion that they know very little. Let the "cats" be produced.' But the Government were obdurate. They had given way on Bright's amendment. They now meant to stand firm. Parnell, however, kept pegging away. He moved that when a man received more than twelve lashes he should be expelled from the army with ignominy, but the amendment was defeated by 109 votes.

Obstruction, of which there had been very little up to about June 20, now began, and the Irish pushed to the front, 'Mr. Parnell,' as the 'Annual Register' put it, 'providing them with opportunities by moving a succession of minute amendments relative to the provisions for enlisting and billeting.'

On July 3 Mr. Callan, in an amusing speech, informed the House that he had paid a visit to the Library, and had seen the 'cat'—in fact, several 'cats'—which he graphically described. The Ministers questioned the accuracy of Mr. Callan's description of the 'instruments of torture.' 'Produce the "cats,"' said Parnell; 'then we shall know who is right.' Ultimately the 'cats' were produced on July 5. Mr. Callan's description

[1] 'Chamberlain,' said Mr. Justin McCarthy, 'spoke to me with great admiration of Parnell, and said that his obstructive tactics were the only tactics to succeed.'

was accurate, and the sight of the 'instruments of torture' proved fatal to the position of the Government. 'Abolish flogging,' urged Mr. Chamberlain on this same day (July 5), 'and your Bill will be passed at once; otherwise it will be systematically opposed and obstructed.'

Colonel Stanley asked Mr. Chamberlain to suspend further opposition until the schedule was put in. 'Agreed,' said Chamberlain, and he appealed to Parnell to let the clauses then under consideration go through. 'No,' cried Parnell, and he moved to report progress on the instant, showing a relentless front and keeping the committee sitting for three hours longer.

On July 7 Colonel Stanley announced that the Government had resolved to abolish flogging in all cases except when death was the alternative.

Mr. Chamberlain expressed his dissatisfaction with this arrangement, and urged that flogging should be wholly and unconditionally abolished. Lord Hartington supported the Government, when Mr. Chamberlain denounced him in a bitter speech as: 'The noble lord, lately the leader of the Opposition, now the leader of a section of the Opposition.' Bright stood by Chamberlain, and Parnell and the Irish took the same side.

On July 15 Parnell and Mr. Chamberlain still showed fight, when Lord Hartington promised that if they allowed the Bill to pass through committee he would move a resolution on the report to give effect to their wishes. They agreed, and on July 17 Lord Hartington, on behalf of the whole Liberal party, moved: 'That no Bill for the discipline and regulation of the army will be satisfactory to this House which provides for the retention of corporal punishment for military offences.' This was the final struggle. The Government stood

by their concession of July 7, and defeated Lord Hartington's resolution by 291 to 185 votes. So ended the campaign against the 'cat' in 1879—flogging was abolished in all cases except when the alternative punishment was death. In 1881 it was abolished altogether. In the end other men became as anxious for the abolition of the 'cat' as Parnell; but it was he who began the fight, and who carried it on with a skill and tenacity which made victory secure.

From Westminster Parnell hastened to Ireland to take part in the Ennis election in July. There were two candidates in the field: Mr. William O'Brien (Whig), a Catholic barrister and Crown prosecutor, and Mr. Finnigan (Home Ruler), Parnell's nominee. The bishops and the priests supported Mr. O'Brien, the advanced men stood by Mr. Finnigan. It was the Ennis election that tested Parnell's strength in the country. 'If Ennis had been lost,' he said afterwards, 'I would have retired from public life, for it would have satisfied me that the priests were supreme in Irish politics.' Ennis was not lost. Mr. Finnigan was returned.

Some days later an incident occurred which caused a good deal of commotion at the time, and gave Parnell not a little trouble. The Irish University Bill (which afterwards became law)[1] was before the House of Commons. Parnell took an advanced position in the discussion. He was, in fact, in favour of the extreme Catholic demand—namely, a Catholic university. Mr. Gray, the proprietor of the 'Freeman's Journal,' and other moderate Catholic members were in favour of a

[1] The Bill establishing a Royal university—practically an examining board. Curiously enough, the Government said they would not deal with the subject at the beginning of the session; but, to buy off Parnell's opposition to their measures generally, they introduced and passed it at the end.

compromise such as the Government proposed. There was a meeting of the Irish members to consider the subject. Some hot words passed between the extreme and the moderate men, and Parnell was reported to have referred contemptuously to the moderates as 'Papist rats.' Currency was given to this report in the 'Freeman's Journal.' Parnell said the statement was 'absolutely false,' and several of the extreme Catholics corroborated his assertion. Still, there was a good deal of unpleasantness over the matter, and many people believed that Parnell used the words. As a matter of fact he did not use them. They were used by an extreme Catholic just as the meeting had broken up and when there was a good deal of confusion in the room. 'The first time I ever had a talk with Parnell about politics,' Mr. Corbett, the present member for Wicklow, said to me, 'was about the "Papist rats" incident. Gray and Parnell had differed on the education question. Gray was in favour of a compromise; Parnell wanted the extreme Catholic demand. Gray succeeded in carrying the party with him, and Parnell was reported to have said, on leaving the room, "these Papist rats." I asked Parnell if he had used the words. He said: "No. The words were used, but not by me. Why, Corbett, should I offend the Catholics of Ireland by speaking insultingly of them? Certainly it would be very foolish, to put the matter on no other ground. An Irish Protestant politician can least of all afford to offend the Catholic priests or laity. No; I would not insult the priests."'

The condition of Ireland was now alarming. Distress was increasing; evictions were imminent; agitation, fed by the poverty of the tenants and the follies of the landlords, spread like wildfire. Towards the end of

April a great land meeting was held in Limerick. Parnell attended. The chairman—a parish priest—made a moderate speech, but the meeting was in no temper for moderation. 'The farmers of Ireland,' said the priest, 'if there are to be peace and loyalty, ought to have free land, as the farmers of Belgium, France, and Holland.' 'We want physical force,' shouted the crowd. 'We must not have Fenianism,' said the priest. 'Three cheers for the Irish republic,' was the response.

Parnell sat calm and impassive while the vast mass before him surged with discontent. When his time for speaking came he made one of those cold-blooded, businesslike speeches which fired the people more than the wild rhetoric of some of his more inflammable colleagues. Repeating the advice he had given at Westport, he told the farmers to keep a 'firm grip on their homesteads,' and to show 'a firm and determined attitude' to the landlords. 'Stand to your guns,' he said, 'and there is no power on earth which can prevail against the hundreds of thousands of tenant farmers of this country.' On September 21 he attended another land meeting in Tipperary. There he once more told the people to rely upon themselves, and themselves alone.

'It is no use relying upon the Government, it is no use relying upon the Irish members, it is no use relying upon the House of Commons. (Groans.) You must rely upon your own determination, that determination which has enabled you to survive the famine years and to be present here to-day—(cheers)—and if you are determined, I tell you, you have the game in your own hands.' (Prolonged cheers.)

Davitt, who was the soul of this land agitation,

now resolved to sweep the various tenant defence societies scattered over the country into one great organisation, and to call it the Land League. His plan was to have a central committee in Dublin, and local branches in the rural districts. He put his views before Parnell. Parnell for a moment hesitated. He had often heard Butt say that organisations of this kind were attended with a good deal of danger. The central authority could not always control the local branches, yet it was responsible for every act of a local branch. The moderate members of the parliamentary party, while sympathising thoroughly with the cause of the tenants, shrank from Davitt's proposal. Parnell, however, with the clearness of vision which always characterised him, saw that the promotion of the League was inevitable. The question was, should it go on without him?

After the conversation with Kickham, if not before, he fully realised that the tenant farmers could never be left out of account; therefore, to hold himself apart from a great land movement would be political suicide. Farmers, Fenians, Home Rulers, bishops, priests—all should be brought into line, and he should lead all. That was the policy, that was the faith, of Parnell.

'Unless we unite all shades of political opinion in the country,' he had said at a meeting of the Home Rule League on September 11, 'I fail to see how we can expect ever to attain national independence.' To have a Land League standing by itself and out of touch with the Home Rule League seemed to him, after a little reflection, the height of folly. His principle all the time was 'unity,' and assuredly it would not make for unity to have Davitt at the head of one league and himself, or somebody else, at the head of another.

He saw all the risks of the situation, and he resolved to face them. A united Ireland was the paramount consideration.

On October 21 there was a conference of Nationalists and Land Reformers at the Imperial Hotel, Dublin, and there and then the 'Irish National Land League' was formed, for the purpose of 'bringing about a reduction of rack rents' and facilitating the creation of a peasant proprietary. 'The objects of the League,' so ran one of the resolutions, 'can best be attained by defending those who may be threatened with eviction for refusing to pay unjust rents; and by obtaining such reforms in the laws relating to land as will enable every tenant to become the owner of his holding by paying a fair rent for a limited number of years. Parnell was elected president of the League; Mr. Biggar, Mr. O'Sullivan, Mr. Patrick Egan, hon. treasurers; Mr. Davitt, Mr. Kettle, Mr. Brennan, hon. secretaries. Thus of the seven first chosen officers four were Fenians or ex-Fenians—Biggar, Egan, Brennan, Davitt—and all were in sympathy with Fenianism. The Land League was, in fact, the organisation of the New Departure. Within twelve months of his return from America Davitt had established a formidable association, well fitted in every respect to carry out the policy which he and Devoy had planned. Davitt and his colleagues might be in rebellion against England. They were also in rebellion against the governing body of the Fenian society. Land League meetings were now held constantly throughout the country, and speeches of extreme violence were delivered. The fight between the League and the Government had commenced in earnest.

The agitators acted with vigour and ability; the Government with supineness and stupidity. Disbe-

lieving in the reality of the land movement, they had allowed it to grow; then, suddenly alarmed at the outlook, they struck at it in the moment of its strength, and finally recoiled from the impetus of their own blow. Davitt, Daly (a Mayo journalist), and Killen (a barrister) addressed a meeting at Gurteen, in the county of Sligo, on November 2. They made violent speeches, not, however, exceeding in 'lawlessness' of tone the calm incitements to 'rebellion' which had characterised the unrhetorical utterances of Parnell at Westport, Limerick, and Tipperary. Yet the Government resolved to punish them while letting the wily Parliamentarian go free. On November 19 the three Land Leaguers were arrested. Parnell showed his appreciation of this move by attending a meeting at Balla, County Mayo, a few days later, summoned to protest against evictions and to denounce the Government. Brennan, one of the secretaries of the League, was the orator of the day. He delivered a furious oration, defying the authorities, and appealing to the Royal Irish Constabulary who were present to stand by 'their kith and kin,' and not to play the base part of the 'destroyers of their own people' by helping on the work of eviction. While the meeting wildly cheered the fiery sentences of Brennan, Parnell sat unmoved. Then he rose, congratulated Brennan on the 'magnificent speech' to which they had listened, and added, with imperturbable gravity: 'I fear very much that the result of the lead which Mr. Brennan has taken in the movement will be that he will be sent to share the fate of Mr. Davitt, Mr. Daly, and Mr. Killen.' This proved a true prediction. On December 5 Brennan was arrested. What happened? In a few days the Government flinched, dropped the prosecution, and discharged the prisoners. They had

realised, though rather late in the day for their own dignity, that no jury could be got to convict the Leaguers, and they did not wish to risk a verdict of 'not guilty.' All Ireland laughed at this performance; and landlords and tenants, who had so little in common, joined in regarding the action or non-action of the Administration with contempt and ridicule. As winter approached famine threatened the west, and committees were formed by the Duchess of Marlborough (the wife of the Lord-Lieutenant) and by the Lord Mayors to collect food and clothing for the starving peasantry. At the Land League Conference of October 21 a resolution had been passed requesting Parnell to visit America 'for the purpose of obtaining assistance from our exiled fellow-countrymen.' This resolution was now put into effect, and on December 21 Parnell set out for New York (accompanied by Mr. Dillon) on the twofold mission of appealing for funds to save the tenant farmers from immediate ruin, and of consolidating the union between the Irish at home and the Irish abroad.

CHAPTER X

THE CLAN-NA-GAEL—THE GENERAL ELECTION

'WELL, Parnell has his work cut out for him now, at all events. If he can hold his ground with the Clan-na-Gael, and afterwards hold it in the House of Commons, he will win Home Rule. The Clan-na-Gael are the open and avowed enemies of England. Their policy is to strike her anywhere and anyhow. What is Parnell going to say to them? If he speaks with an eye to the House of Commons his speeches won't go down with the Clan. If he speaks with an eye to the Clan his speeches will be used with tremendous effect against him in the House. It is all very well for men who are not members of Parliament to go among Revolutionists. But the member of Parliament has to face the music at St. Stephen's; and how Parnell is going to face it after his visit to the Clan-na-Gael I don't know.'

So said an Irish Home Rule member to me on the eve of Parnell's departure for the United States.

Parnell himself set out on his mission with a light heart. What the House of Commons would think, or would not think, gave him little trouble. He was not in the habit of forecasting the future to an extent which would interfere with the operations of the present.

'Sufficient for the day is the work thereof'; that was practically his motto. He saw his way clearly to a given point; he went straight to that point, and then surveyed the situation afresh. 'The critical side of his character is too strongly developed. He can only see difficulties.' This has been said of an English Liberal statesman of our own day. It could not be said of Parnell. No man certainly was so quick in seeing, or rather in judging, difficulties; but neither was any man so adroit, so ready, so resourceful in overcoming them. Difficulties paralyse the mere man of thought; they nerve the man of action. Parnell had the eye of a general. He took in the whole situation at a glance. He knew when to advance, when to retreat. He divined with the instinct of genius when a position had to be stormed, and when it could be turned with safety.

When the time for action came he made up his mind quickly; he did not hesitate, he did not flinch. His objective now was the union of all Irishmen, not only in Ireland but all over the world, against England. This was a vital point, and he was prepared to do anything, to risk anything, for it. The opinion of the House of Commons was nothing to him. The House, he felt, would give way quickly enough before a united Ireland; and of a united Ireland he thought alone. The Irish in America were a great force. It was essential to bring them into line with the Irish at home. The Clan-na-Gael was probably not an immaculate organisation. But was the English Government in Ireland immaculate? He would avail himself of every power within his reach to attack that Government; and would show exactly the same amount of 'scruple' in dealing with England that England had habitually

shown in dealing with his own nation. If he could he would have preferred to settle the Anglo-Irish question by open warfare. That was not possible. He would, therefore, use whatever means were ready to his hand for out-manœuvring the 'common enemy.' He had no more intention of giving himself away to the Clan-na-Gael than he had of giving himself away to the British Minister. But, after all, there was something in common between him and the Clan, however much they might differ about the *modus operandi*. They both hated England. Between him and the British Minister there was nothing in common. He would accordingly use the Clan, as he would use every Irish organisation, to fight the Britisher. For the rest he would trust to the fortunes of war.

Parnell arrived in New York early in 1880. His work was indeed cut out for him. The Clan-na-Gael were not united in favour of the 'new departure.' There were many important members of the organisation opposed to the parliamentary movement and anxious to make war against it. These men had to be won over, or their hostility, at least, disarmed. Success in this respect was, however, only half the battle. There were thousands of Irishmen who were not Fenians, yet they had to be brought into line with the Fenians. Lastly, the sympathy of the Americans themselves had to be enlisted in the cause of Ireland. How were these things to be accomplished? Most Irish agitators believe in talking. Parnell believed in listening, and by listening, chiefly, he got into the good graces of the Clan-na-Gael. He saw the leaders. He heard what they had to say. He held his tongue. He made no compact; he entered into no undertaking. He asked only for fair play for the parliamentary

movement. 'I believe in it,' he said; 'give it a chance.' His path was not a smooth one in America. There were those in the Clan who said: 'Do not trust Parnell; he will use you for his own purposes, he will make our movement subservient to his.' This was particularly the opinion of the Fenian agent who had been sent to Europe in 1878. Then he was more or less favourably disposed to the 'new departure.' Now he was vehemently against it. He quarrelled with Parnell. 'Mr. Parnell,' he said one day with much warmth, 'you are always making inquiries about the Clan-na-Gael. We don't like it. It shows you suspect us. I cannot work with a man who suspects me. The fact is, Mr. Parnell, you want to become the master of the Clan-na-Gael, to use it for the constitutional movement. That is your aim. Well, I won't work on that basis.' It was Parnell's luck—if luck it is to be called—that he almost always succeeded in neutralising the hostility of the men who opposed him; and this particular Fenian soon found himself in a minority.

The public platform is the breath of the nostrils of the ordinary Irish agitator. He loves it. Parnell detested it. 'I hate public assemblies,' he once said to a friend; 'it is always an effort for me to attend them. I am always nervous. I dislike crowds.' The public platform had, however, to be used, and, despite his aversion to it, Parnell used it with effect in America.

At Brooklyn, on January 24, 1880, he said: 'We do not ask you to send armed expeditions over to Ireland (a voice, "That's what we would like." Applause.) I know that you would like to do that very much. (Applause, "Right.") I think I know what

you are going to say, and what you would like to do, and what you are willing to do, and how willing you will be to help us all. But we ask you to help us in preventing the people who have taken our advice, and who are exhibiting an attitude of devotion which has never been surpassed—what we ask you to do is to help us in preventing these people from being starved to death. This is not a new enterprise; this struggle has gone on for many centuries, and it is bound to go on to the bitter end, and in one way or another the Irish people will insist upon having the land of Ireland for themselves, and the end of it will be that these men who till the soil will also own it. The high heart of our country remains unquelled, the will and courage of our race unquenched, and they are strengthened by the great power of our people in this free land. I feel very confident that the day is very near at hand when we shall have struck the first blow, the first vital blow, at the land system as it now exists in Ireland, and then we shall have taken the first step to obtain for Ireland that right to nationhood for which she has struggled so long and so well.'

At Cleveland, on January 26, 1880, he said: 'I have said that we are fighting this battle against heavy odds. I have also said that we feel confident of winning it. It has given me great pleasure during my visit to the cities of this country to see the armed regiments of Irishmen who have frequently turned out to escort us; and when I saw some of these gallant men to-day, who are even now in this hall, I thought that each one of them must wish, with Sarsfield of old, when dying upon a foreign battlefield, "Oh! that I could carry these arms for Ireland." Well, it may come to that some day or other.'

At Cincinnati, on February 23, 1880, he said: 'I feel confident that we shall kill the Irish landlord system, and when we have given Ireland to the people of Ireland we shall have laid the foundation upon which to build up our Irish nation. The feudal tenure and the rule of the minority have been the corner-stone of English misrule. Pull out that corner-stone, break it up, destroy it, and you undermine English mis-government. When we have undermined English misgovernment we have paved the way for Ireland to take her place among the nations of the earth. And let us not forget that that is the ultimate goal at which all we Irishmen aim. None of us, whether we be in America or in Ireland, or wherever we may be, will be satisfied until we have destroyed the last link which keeps Ireland bound to England.'

At Rochester, in February 1880, he said: 'I am bound to admit that it is the duty of every Irishman to shed the last drop of his blood in order to obtain his rights, if there were a probable chance of success, yet at the same time we all recognise the great responsibility of hurling our unarmed people on the points of British bayonets. We must act with prudence when the contest would be hopeless, and not rush upon destruction.'

It would be doing scant justice to Parnell to suggest for an instant that these speeches were made merely for the purpose of conciliating the Clan-na-Gael. Far from it. In what he said he spoke the faith that was in him. Other speeches he made to Irishmen who were not Fenians, and then he dealt with the land question alone. But he did not take off his coat to reform the land laws of Ireland. He took off his coat to loosen the English grip on the island. Therefore at

Brooklyn, Cleveland, and Cincinnati he spoke from his heart.

His progress in America was a triumphal procession. He went everywhere, and everywhere he was received with open arms. Large towns and small vied with each other in showing honour to him, and sympathy for the cause he represented. Public bodies presented addresses to him. Irish soldiers lined the streets of the cities through which he passed. Governors of States waited on him. Congress itself threw open its doors to let him plead the cause of his country before the Parliament of the republic. 'In spite, and partly perhaps because, of the attacks directed at us by a portion of the Eastern Press,' he wrote to P. Egan on March 1, 'the enthusiasm increases in volume as we proceed from place to place, military guards and salvoes of artillery salute our coming, and the meetings which we address, although high admission charge is made, are packed from floor to roof. State Governors, members of Congress, local representatives, judges, clergymen, continually appear upon the platform.'

'In two months,' he said subsequently, 'we visited sixty-two different cities—that is, little more than one city a night. Between two of these cities we on one occasion travelled 1,400 miles. During the two months we remained in America we travelled together something like 10,000 or 11,000 by land. This, joined to the 6,000 miles of ocean there and back, amounts roughly to 16,000 miles in three months, which is not bad for a man. The net result of these sixty-two cities was 200,000 dollars actually in the hands of our committee in America.'[1]

[1] The honour extended to Parnell of addressing the House of Representatives was shared only by three other individuals. Curiously enough O'Meara Condon, one of the men tried and convicted in con-

From the United States Parnell went to Canada, whither he was accompanied by Mr. Healy, who had joined him in America. 'I was with him,' says Mr. Healy, 'for about three weeks, but I have not much to tell beyond what appears in the newspapers. We went to Canada together. Before starting the Bishop of Toronto wrote to Parnell to warn him against coming, suggesting that he would probably be attacked by the Orangemen. Parnell sent a dignified reply, saying he had promised to come, that he would keep his word, and that he had no apprehensions of disturbance. We came. There was no row, nor sign of a row. "Perhaps," said Parnell with an enigmatical smile, "the Orangemen do not wish to attack a Protestant." On arriving at Toronto Parnell went straight to a telegraph station, and told me to "come along." He took up a telegram form, wrote out a message with great pains, and then tore up the form. He tried again, and went on boggling over his message until I thought he would never get done. At length he apparently satisfied himself, and then handed the message to me, saying, 'Is that all right?' It was simply a wire to his mother in New York saying that he had arrived safely, and that she need have no fears about him as all was quiet and peaceful. But *it was written in French*. That was the cause of the boggling. I thought it was very odd that he should (to secure secrecy) send a telegram in French from Toronto, where they speak French as well as they do in Paris. I felt inclined to tell him so; but thought on reflection that it was no business of mine. Moreover, it struck me

nection with the Manchester rescue, and who had cried from the dock, 'God save Ireland,' was a prominent member of the committee which organised Parnell's reception by Congress.

that perhaps he wanted to keep someone in the dark in New York. Another thing struck me about this incident. There was this cold, callous man, who seemed not to care for anyone, rushing off to a telegraph office to wire his mother not to be uneasy about him. He was a man of surprises, and certainly very fond of his own family.

'We had a great meeting at Toronto. But the biggest meeting I ever attended was at Montreal. It was here he was first called the "uncrowned king." A high charge was made for admission. The hall, the biggest in the city, could not hold all the people who wanted to come. The enthusiasm was tremendous. Parnell sat like a sphinx the whole time. He seemed not to be a bit touched by the demonstration. The whole town went mad about him. Everyone was affected but himself.

'Next day, as we steamed out of the railway station, returning to New York, I repeated some humorous lines which I had recently read about Montreal. I wanted to see if Parnell could see the fun of them. He listened in a dreamy way until I was done, and then said: "I have been thinking if anyone will ever pay to come and hear me lecture again." The poem was thrown away on him.

'We left New York for Ireland on a bitterly cold March morning. The 69th Regiment[1] saw us off. As soon as I got on board the tender I turned towards the cabin to get under shelter from the driving sleet. Parnell stood on the bridge the whole time until the tender left with head uncovered; and it was a fine sight to see the 69th salute as we sailed off, and Parnell wave his hand in response, looking like a king.'

[1] This regiment was at one time composed entirely of Fenians.

Parnell's last act before starting for Ireland was to form an American Land League. A hurried meeting was held in New York. The Fenians dominated it, though Constitutionalists also attended at Parnell's special request. A committee of seven was appointed to frame a constitution for the new association, and out of these seven four were members of the Clan-na-Gael. We have seen that Davitt was one of the secretaries of the Irish Land League. John Devoy was now appointed one of the treasurers of the American Land League. Thus the joint authors of the policy of the new departure held important posts in the joint organisations founded (*inter alia*) to carry out that policy. What then, briefly, was the situation in the spring of 1880? Within the American Land League there were Constitutionalists, between whom and the Revolutionists much friction existed; but the Revolutionists were always in a majority. In the Irish Land League the overwhelming majority were Constitutionalists, but the most active spirits were Fenians or ex-Fenians. The supreme council of the I. R. B. fought to the last against the Leaguers—without, however, producing any permanent effect on the course of events. Parnell all the time concentrated the whole of his energies in uniting the discordant elements of which the whole movement against England was composed. He was the centre of unity.

Meanwhile the agitation in Ireland went steadily on. The distress of the people in the western districts grew appalling. Evictions increased. No reductions in rent were made. The landlords, with the madness of the old French *régime*, foresaw nothing, and unconsciously fanned the flames which were to consume them. On the meeting of Parliament Mr. Shaw moved

an amendment to the Address affirming that, 'although in possession of timely warning and information, the Government had not taken adequate steps to alleviate the distress,' and adding that 'it was essential to the peace and prosperity of Ireland to legislate at once in a comprehensive manner on those questions which affect the tenure of land in Ireland, the neglect of which by Parliament had been the true cause of the constantly recurring disaffection and distress in Ireland.' In the debate which followed Sir Stafford Northcote made a statement on the subject of that distress which we are told 'startled' the House. 'The statistics,' says the 'Annual Register,' 'given by Sir S. Northcote from the report of the Registrar-General on the agricultural condition of Ireland were startling. It was estimated that there had been a falling off in the principal crops from the yield of the previous year to the value of 10,000,000*l.* The value of the potato crop was more than 6,000,000*l.* below the average. . . . Figures of such an enormous deficiency startled many who had been previously disposed to believe that the Irish distress had no serious foundation except in the imaginations of the Home Rulers and anti-rent agitators.' The British Parliament, with characteristic indifference, had turned a deaf ear to the remonstrances of the Irish representatives until famine was upon the land and the fires of agitation were blazing in every district. Even then Ministers pottered with the situation. Of course Mr. Shaw's amendment was defeated by an overwhelming majority—216 against 66—the notion of reforming the land laws of Ireland was scouted, and an inadequate Relief Bill passed.[1]

[1] This Relief Bill was thus described by the present Lord Chief Justice of England before the Parnell Commission: 'The form it took

'Then, to the astonishment of everyone, the Dissolution was sprung upon the country.[1] The Government tried to make Home Rule the issue of the conflict, and to stir up English passion and prejudice against Ireland. 'My Lord Duke,' said Lord Beaconsfield in his letter to the Irish Viceroy, the Duke of Marlborough, 'A danger in its ultimate results scarcely less disastrous than pestilence and famine, and which now engages your Excellency's anxious attention, distracts Ireland.

was advancing to Irish landlords 1,100,000*l.* of the surplus funds of the disestablished Church in Ireland, to lend that money to Irish landlords without interest for two years, and at the end of two years at the rate of one per cent.; and, unless numbers of landlords are gravely maligned, when they employed their tenants and paid them wages out of this fund for working upon their own farms (which wages went towards payment of rent), those tenants were charged in some cases four and five and even more per cent., and that in perpetuity, on the very money advanced by the State for their relief, thus getting the relief filtered through the hands of the landlords in this indirect and very ineffective fashion' (Speech of Sir Charles Russell, p. 159).

[1] The Government made another attempt in February to deal with obstruction, and passed the following resolution: 'That whenever any member shall have been named by the Speaker or by the chairman of a committee of the whole House as disregarding the authority of the chair, or abusing the rules of the House by persistently and wilfully obstructing the business of the House or otherwise, then, if the offence has been committed in the House, the Speaker shall forthwith put the question or motion being made, no amendment, adjournment, or debate being allowed: "That such member be suspended from the service of the House during the remainder of that day's sitting;" and if the offence has been committed in a committee of the whole House, the chairman shall, on motion being made, put the same question in a similar way, and if the motion is carried shall forthwith suspend the proceedings of the committee and report the circumstance to the House, and the Speaker shall thereupon put the same question, without amendment, adjournment, or debate, as if the offence had been committed in the House itself. If any member be suspended three times in one session under this order, this suspension on the third occasion shall continue for one week and until a motion has been made, upon which it shall be decided at one sitting by the House whether the suspension shall then cease or for what longer period it shall continue, and on the occasion of such motion the member may, if he desires it, be heard in his place. Provided always that nothing in this resolution shall be taken to deprive the House of the power of proceeding against any member according to ancient usages.'

A portion of its population is attempting to sever the constitutional tie which unites it to Great Britain in that bond which has favoured the power and prosperity of both.'[1] Mr. Gladstone refused to accept the issue as stated by Lord Beaconsfield, and resolved to fight the Government upon the whole line of their policy; but chiefly on the question of foreign affairs. To the paragraph in the Prime Minister's letter dealing with Ireland Mr. Gladstone replied in his address to the electors of Midlothian: 'Gentlemen, those who endangered the Union with Ireland were the party that maintained there an alien Church, an unjust land law, and franchises inferior to our own; and the true supporters of the Union are those who uphold the supreme authority of Parliament, but exercise that authority to bind the three nations by the indissoluble tie of liberal and equal laws. Let me say that in my opinion these two great subjects of local government and the land laws ought now to occupy a foremost place in the thoughts of every man who aspires to be a legislator. In the matter of local government there may lie a solution of some national and even Imperial difficulties. It will not be in my power to enter largely [now] upon the important question of the condition of Ireland; but you know well how unhappily the action of Parliament has been impeded and disorganised, from considerations, no doubt, conscientiously entertained by a part of the Irish repre-

[1] A month before the Dissolution an election took place at Liverpool which once more showed the power of the Irish vote in the English constituencies. Lord Ramsay, the Liberal candidate, was obliged to take the Home Rule pledge (*i.e.* to vote for an inquiry). He was beaten by a majority of 2,000, but the fact that the Liberal wire-pullers felt that the Home Rulers had to be won over in a great constituency like Liverpool produced a strong impression in political circles throughout the whole country.

sentatives, and from their desire to establish what they term Home Rule. If you ask me what I think of Home Rule, I must tell you that I will only answer you when you tell me how Home Rule is related to local government. I am friendly to large local privileges and powers. I desire, I may almost say I intensely desire, to see Parliament relieved of some portion of its duties. I see the efficiency of Parliament interfered with, not only by obstruction from Irish members, but even more gravely by the enormous weight that is placed upon the time and the minds of those whom you send to represent you. We have got an overweighted Parliament, and if Ireland or any other portion of the country is desirous and able so to arrange its affairs that by taking the local part or some local part of its transactions off the hands of Parliament it can liberate and strengthen Parliament for Imperial concerns, I say I will not only accord a reluctant assent, but I will give a zealous support to any such scheme. One limit, gentlemen, one limit only, I know to the extension of local government. It is this; nothing can be done, in my opinion, by any wise statesman or right-minded Briton to weaken or compromise the authority of the Imperial Parliament, because the Imperial Parliament must be supreme in these three kingdoms. And nothing that creates a doubt upon that supremacy can be tolerated by an intelligent and patriotic man. But, subject to that limitation, if we can make arrangements under which Ireland, Scotland, Wales, portions of England, can deal with questions of local and special interest to themselves more efficiently than Parliament now can, that, I say, will be the attainment of a great national good.'

It was the sudden Dissolution that forced Parnell to bring his American tour to an abrupt termination, and to hasten back to Ireland, where he arrived on March 21.

Parnell thought much of the Clan-na-Gael as a powerful political organisation. In his evidence before the Special Commission he said: 'I believe that so far as any active interest was taken at the time of my going to America by Irishmen in the Irish question, it was by the men of revolutionary physical-force ideas. I believe that the great bulk of the Irish people in America, until I went there, did not take any interest at all in Irish politics.' Nevertheless, he disliked the Clan, because he feared it would give him much trouble. Even at this early date he foresaw that some of its members might run into excesses, which would compromise him and bring discredit on the national movement. He knew, too, that as three thousand miles of ocean separated him from the organisation, he could exercise little restraining influence over its operations.

But he could not ignore the Clan; he could not ignore any important Irish political association. His central idea was to attack England. He took the help of all allies for that purpose, and faced the consequences. On landing at Queenstown he was met by some members of the I. R. B., who presented him with an address which contained these words:

'We must take the opportunity to express our clear conviction of the hopelessness of looking for justice to Ireland from the English Parliament, and the firm belief of the intelligent manhood of the country that it is utterly futile to seek for any practical national good through the means of parliamentary representation.

Impelled by such convictions, the Nationalists of the country have determined, as a political party, they will take no part in the coming elections, and consequently no part in the adoption, rejection, or support of the parliamentary candidates.'

We have seen that in 1879 the supreme council of the I. R. B. passed a resolution to the effect that the members of the rank and file might take part in the parliamentary movement at their own risk. In 1880 this resolution was rescinded, and it was declared that no Fenian, under any circumstances, should co-operate with the constitutional party. The Queenstown address simply gave expression to this determination. Some days later Parnell received further proof that all the Fenians had not acquiesced in the new departure. The platform from which he addressed a meeting in Enniscorthy in support of the parliamentary candidature of his nominees, Mr. Barry and Mr. Byrne, was attacked, and he himself almost dragged from it to the ground. Mr. John Redmond, who stood by his side on the platform, has thus described the scene to me:

'I met Parnell in 1880 after his return from America. I was at Enniscorthy with him. It was an awful scene. There were about 4,000 to 5,000 people there. They all seemed to be against him. I remember one man shouting, though what he meant I could not tell: "We will show Parnell that the blood of Vinegar Hill is still green." The priests were against Parnell. Parnell stood on the platform calm and self-possessed. There was no use in trying to talk. He faced the crowd, looking sad and sorrowful, but not at all angry; it was an awful picture of patience. A rotten egg was flung at him. It struck him on the

beard and trickled down. He took no notice of it, never wiped it off, and was not apparently conscious of it; he faced the crowd steadfastly, and held his ground. One man rushed at him, seized him by the leg, and tore his trouser right up from bottom to top. There was no chance of a hearing, and we got away from the platform and went to the hotel to lunch. Parnell ate a hearty lunch while a waiter was busy stitching his trousers all the time. It was a comical sight. Afterwards we went for a walk. We were met by a hostile mob, and I was knocked down and cut in the face. I got up as quickly as I could and made my way to the railway station. When Parnell saw me he said: "Why, you are bleeding. What is the matter?" I told him what had happened, and he said, smiling: "Well, you have shed your blood for me at all events."'

Into the General Election Parnell flung himself with ardour and vigour, working literally day and night, selecting candidates, superintending all details, flying from constituency to constituency, and inspiring everyone with his energy and determination. Three constituencies vied with each other for the honour of electing him—Meath, Mayo, and Cork City. The circumstances under which he was nominated for Cork were curious, and even remarkable. Here is the story as told to me by his election agent and faithful friend, Mr. Horgan:

'The nomination for Cork City was fixed for March 31, the candidates being H. D. Murphy (Whig), William Goulding (Conservative), and John Daly (Home Ruler). Up to the day of the nomination the advanced Nationalists of Cork took no interest in the election. Of course, they cared nothing for the

Whig nor the Tory, and the Home Ruler was far too moderate.

'On the day of the nomination, however, a politician of supposed Nationalist leanings (whom we shall call Y.) came into my office, accompanied by some genuine Nationalists. He handed me a nomination paper bearing Parnell's name. The paper was signed by the Rev. John O'Mahony, C.C., and another priest, the Rev. Denis McCarthy, and by several other electors. Y. asked me to sign as nominator, and to hand the paper to the Sheriff. Before signing I asked him if he had Mr. Parnell's sanction. He replied that he had, and produced 250*l.* in bank-notes, which he said Mr. Parnell had sent him from Dublin that morning.

'I was at once convinced by the production of the money that the matter was all right. I signed the nomination paper, and had only time to rush from my office across the street to the Sheriff's office and hand it in. Y. gave me 50*l.* to pay the Sheriff's fees. There were a few thousand people on the South Mall, opposite the Sheriff's office, and when they heard that Parnell had been nominated they cheered vigorously and became intensely excited.

'The friends of Daly and Murphy were both greatly annoyed, and as I was returning to my office I was jostled about by some of them, and the late Sir D. V. O'Sullivan shouted into my face: "Parnell will not poll the 511 given to John Mitchell at the last election."

'Of course it was the advanced Nationalists who had supported Mitchell at the last election, and the same men were supporting Parnell now. The result of bringing Mitchell forward then was to split the

Liberal vote and to let the Tory Goulding slip in. O'Sullivan feared a similar result now, though in any case he would not like to see an "Extremist" like Parnell returned.

'Murphy was a strong candidate, having immense local influence, and the Catholic Bishop, Dr. Delaney, was at his back. In the evening I had a wire from Parnell from Morrison's Hotel, Dublin, thanking me for nominating him, and saying he would come down by the night mail on Friday, April 2.

'During Friday afternoon a rumour was freely circulated that Parnell was the Tory nominee. On Saturday morning he arrived at 2 A.M. I met him at the railway station. He surprised me by asking how he came to be nominated. "Why," I said, "did you not authorise Y. to nominate you, and send him 250*l.* to pay expenses?" "I did not send him a farthing," said Parnell, "and I know nothing whatever about him; never heard of him. There is something that wants looking into here." "Well," I said, "let us come to the hotel, at all events; have a rest, and I will send for Father O'Mahony." Accordingly, we went to the hotel. Parnell had some hours' rest, and came down to breakfast looking as fresh as paint. Father O'Mahony had also come, and was much excited about the rumour that Parnell was being run by the Tories. Tim Healy was present too. I told the whole story of how Y. came to me over again.

'When I was done Parnell said, as quick as lightning: "Send for Y." We despatched a messenger for Y., who soon appeared upon the scene. Parnell at once took Y. in hand, and went straight to the point without a moment's delay. "Where did you get the

250*l.* you showed Mr. Horgan on Wednesday last?" he asked, with a keen, determined look. Y. shuffled for a bit, but soon collapsed and made a clean breast of it. He had gone one evening into Goulding's committee rooms, where they were freely discussing the chances of the Nationalists putting forward O'Donovan Rossa or some other impossible candidate, who, like Mitchell, might draw away five or six hundred votes from Daly and Murphy. In such case, they said, Goulding would once more slip in between the broken Liberal ranks.

'Y. was personally known to some of the Tory wire-pullers, and looked upon as an "Extremist" who cared neither for Whig nor Tory, and would not in the least object to spoil the Whig game. He was sounded there and then, and told that if he could get an extreme Nationalist candidate the Tories would pay the Sheriff's fees and give him (Y.) 200*l.* for himself.

'Y. undertook to bring forward such a candidate, but said he would not disclose the name until the day of nomination. He stipulated, however, that the 250*l.* should be given to him at once. This was agreed to, and Mr. B —— handed Y. the money (250*l.*).

'That was Y.'s plain unvarnished tale. When he had finished Parnell said: "You gave 50*l.* to Mr. Horgan on the day of the nomination. Where is the remaining 200*l.*?" Y. refused to tell. Parnell pressed him; he still held out. "Y.," said Parnell at last, with a determined look, "if you do not tell me at once where the money is I will raise that window and denounce you to the citizens of Cork." An immense crowd had by this time gathered outside. Y. looked at the crowd and then at Parnell, and

finally put his hand into his breeches pocket and pulled out a bundle of bank-notes. "There is the 200*l.*," said he. Healy, who was nearest to him, seized the notes at once. "Now," said Parnell, "the question is what shall we do with the money." "Return it to the Tories at once," said Father O'Mahony. "Nonsense,' said Healy. "We'll fight the election with it. It will be all the sweeter to win the seat with Tory money." Tim relished the fun of the thing immensely. "I think the best thing to do at present," said Parnell, "is to hand the money to Mr. Horgan until we have time to consider the matter." Tim then handed me the notes. Well, we kept the money. It was barely enough, although we ran the contest on the most economical lines.

'Parnell addressed the citizens (an enormous crowd) from the hotel windows that night, and was cheered with wild delight. I remember that the "Cork Examiner" (Whig), which attacked Parnell, was publicly burned outside the window. On Sunday, April 4, we started after breakfast with Parnell and a large body of supporters on cars for Douglas, a village three miles from Cork, where Parnell addressed the rural voters after Mass, and then we drove to Blackrock, another rural parish, where he also addressed another meeting. Then we drove to the other side of the city to Glanmire, where the people took the horses from his car and drew him back to Cork.

'Next we proceeded to the city park, where he addressed thirty thousand people wild with excitement. His horses again were unyoked, and he was drawn back to the hotel. That night at eight o'clock he addressed the people from the hotel window. The crowd was enormous, and occupied the whole of

Patrick Street. I never will forget his opening words. They acted like an electric shock on the excited people. He said, in slow and measured language, with a deep pause after each word: "Citizens of Cork. This is the night before the battle. To your guns then." It was quite evident that we had all Cork with us, and that there was no fear of Parnell at the election next day.

'At breakfast on Monday morning Parnell decided to nominate Mr. Kettle for the county[1]; the nomination was to be on that day from ten to twelve o'clock at the Court House. The difficulty was to get a nomination paper without disclosing what we were about. So I wrote out the form of nomination on an ordinary sheet of notepaper. Then the difficulty was to get ten county electors to sign it, as the city liberties extend seven or eight miles around the city. As twelve o'clock was the latest hour fixed for receiving nominations, we were hard pressed for time. I suggested that I should get a county list of voters, and with it proceed to the corn and butter markets, where numbers of county farmers usually were. Accordingly we drove off to the corn market, and every man we saw with a frieze coat we asked his name and where he was from, and then looked out for the name in the list of voters, and, on finding it, got the man to sign the nomination paper. At the corn market we only got a few names; we then drove to the butter market, where we got some farmers from Castletown Bearhaven, and some from Chorlevelly, and different other parts of the county. Then we drove to the Court House, where Kettle and Parnell missed each other, and as the last moment for lodging the

[1] The Home Rule candidates already nominated were Shaw and Colonel Colthurst.

paper was at hand great excitement prevailed. Kettle —who, as the candidate, had to hand in the nomination paper—could not be found ; none of his nominators were on the spot either. Parnell was very anxious, and kept dashing up and down the stairs and about the court doors, seeking for Kettle. At the last moment Kettle arrived and handed Mr. Johnson, the sub-sheriff, the nomination paper. John George McCarthy, the agent for Shaw and Colthurst, objected, first on the ground that we were late ; but the Sheriff said the time by his watch wanted half a minute to twelve o'clock, and accordingly ruled that we were in time. Then McCarthy objected to the paper because it was informal, being on a sheet of notepaper instead of the Sheriff's printed form. That was also overruled, and then the names of the nominators were questioned ; but they were found to be all right, and so Kettle was nominated. There was a great commotion as soon as it was known that Parnell had put up Kettle against Shaw and Colthurst. The local Press were dead against him. Next day the county was placarded with a letter signed by the four Catholic bishops of Cork, Cloyne, Ross, and Kerry (the latter has jurisdiction over several parishes, Millstreet, Glengariff, and Castletown Bere, which, though in the County Cork, are in the Kerry diocese), strongly advocating Shaw and Colthurst. I managed the election all over the county. The priests attended the polling booths, ranged on the side of Shaw and Colthurst, and did all they could against Kettle. Parnell went off immediately after nominating Kettle to Mayo and Meath, being also candidate for each of these counties. On April 6 the poll for the city was declared, and Parnell and Daly were elected. From this until the county polling on

April 14 Parnell kept flying around the counties of Cork, Mayo, and Meath. He was nights and days travelling between the three counties and addressing meetings. James O'Kelly, with Healy and Kettle, remained with me in Cork, and also Lysath Finnigan. These gentlemen scattered themselves about parts of the county, but they were unable to visit one-fifteenth part of the constituency. One day Parnell was in Mayo, next day in Cork, and next in Meath, and so on, eternally flying from one county to the other. I do not believe Parnell slept in a bed for ten days. He was also much engaged with looking after his other various candidates all over Ireland. The county election took place on April 14. Reports came in that the priests were working hard at every polling centre on behalf of Shaw and Colthurst. On April 15 the scrutiny took place. It was very exciting. The voting was very even for some hours. Colthurst was so sure of defeat by Kettle that he retired from the room; but towards the end it was found that Colthurst was ahead of Kettle by 151. Shaw polled 5,354, Colthurst 3,581, and Kettle 3,430, which was a splendid result considering the opposition of the four bishops and all the priests, and the short time we had for preparation.

'About a month after the election Y. brought me a letter from Mr. Harvey, solicitor, demanding payment on behalf of Mr. B—— of the 250*l.* which B—— had given Y., and threatening an action at law if it was not paid. I took Mr. Harvey's letter, and told Y. I would see *him* harmless over the matter and attend to it myself. I wrote to Harvey saying I would accept service of the writ on behalf of Y. I was never served with the writ, so that we had the

satisfaction of returning Parnell at the expense of the Tories.'

Parnell was returned for all three constituencies—Meath, Mayo, and Cork City. He elected ultimately to sit for Cork. It may be asked, What was the attitude of the Catholic Church towards him at this crisis? The majority of the priests were certainly for him, the majority of the bishops were against him. Cardinal McCabe, the late Archbishop of Dublin, was indeed a vehement opponent both of Parnell and of the League.

'The schemes of amelioration proposed by the League,' his Eminence said, 'are of such an order that no Government laying claim to statesmanship can for a moment entertain them.' The Archbishop of Tuam was in sympathy with the Archbishop of Dublin. We have seen how the Bishops of Cork, Cloyne, Ross, and Kerry opposed him at the Cork election. Dr. Croke, the Archbishop of Cashel, was, however, then as later, in favour of a forward policy, and not hostile to the man who was the embodiment of that policy. Of the National Press, the 'Nation' supported Parnell, the 'Freeman's Journal' opposed him. He himself made light of his opponents, feeling that the masses of the people were at his back, and that the dissensionists would soon fall into line.

'But is the movement not opposed by the Nationalists (Fenians) and the priests?' he was asked by an interviewer. 'Indeed it is not,' he answered. 'I should despair of Ireland if the most active forces in the country arrayed themselves against a movement like this. Individual priests may have condemned chance indiscretions; individual Nationalists have protested that we should lie by while preparations are being made to cope with England by physical force, but that is all.

Everyone is welcome to his opinion about this movement, and to express it.'

In Great Britain the Liberals swept the constituencies. In Ireland the Nationalists more than held their ground. Out of 105 seats they won 60, against 44 Unionists. Thus the general result of the election in Great Britain and Ireland (all told) was—Liberals, 349; Tories, 243; Home Rulers, 60.

On April 26 the Irish parliamentary party met in Dublin to elect a leader and to consider other business. The election of leader was postponed until the adjourned meeting in May. 'If Parnell,' an experienced Nationalist said to me at the time, 'allows himself to be nominated as leader of the party he will commit a great mistake. He will do infinitely better, for the present, at all events, by remaining leader of the extreme left, and by keeping the moderates up to the collar. As leader of the whole party his relations with the advanced men would make his position very embarrassing. What we want is a moderate man like Shaw to command the whole party, and an extreme man like Parnell to lead the van.' This was not Parnell's view of the situation. He believed that he was able to lead the Irish party, and that no other man could. The election of leader came off in May. Shaw was nominated by Morris Brooke and Richard Power; Parnell by the O'Gorman Mahon and Biggar.

Result

Parnell	23 votes
Shaw	18 „
Majority for Parnell . .	5[1] „

[1] For Parnell: Sexton, Arthur O'Connor, O'Kelly, Byrne, Barry, McCarthy, Biggar, T. P. O'Connor, Lalor, T. D. Sullivan, Dr. Comyns,

On April 30 there was a great Nationalist meeting at the Rotunda, and it was upon that occasion that Parnell made what has been called the 'bread and lead speech.' He said: 'The Americans sent me back with this message—that for the future you must not expect one cent for charity, but millions to break the land system. And now before I go I will tell you a little incident that happened at one of our meetings in America. A gentleman came on the platform and handed me $25, and said: "Here is $5 for bread and $20 for lead." '

Parnell was now in the saddle, where for eleven years he sat firmly without a competitor or an equal. 'How came Parnell,' I asked Mr. Justin McCarthy, 'to acquire his great ascendency?' He answered: 'He owed his ascendency to his strength of will and his readiness to see what was the right thing to do at a given moment. He was not liked by the party as a whole. S. never liked him. H. very soon began to dislike him. D. was loyal to him, but did not like him. O. liked him. I liked him. But, like or dislike, all bowed to him, because all felt that he was the one man who knew what to do in moments of difficulty, and that he was always right. He had the genius of a Commander-in-Chief. It was that which gave him his power. Others of us might be useful in fixing lines of policy in advance. But when a crisis arose, when something had to be done on the instant which might have a serious effect in the future, we were no good. We were paralysed. Parnell made

Gill, Dawson, Leamy, Corbet, McCoan, Finnigan, Daly, Marum, W. H. O'Sullivan, J. Leahy, O'Gorman Mahon, O'Shea—23.

For Shaw: McFarlane, Brooke, Colthurst, Synan, Sir P. O'Brien, Foley, Smithwick, Fay, Errington, Gabbett, Smyth, R. Power, Blake, McKenna, P. Martin, Meldon, Callan, Gray—18.

up his mind in an instant, and did the thing without doubting or flinching.'

'As a parliamentary strategist,' says Mr. Healy, 'Parnell was simply perfect. No one was like him for seeing the difficulties of a situation and for getting out of them.'

'To what do you ascribe Parnell's success?' I asked Sir Charles Dilke.

He answered: 'To his aloofness. He hated England, English ways, English modes of thought. He would have nothing to do with us. He acted like a foreigner. We could not get at him as at any other man in English public life. He was not one of us in any sense. Dealing with him was like dealing with a foreign Power. This gave him immense advantage, and, coupled with his iron will, explains his ascendency and success.' Inexorable tenacity, sound judgment, knowledge of his own mind at all times, dauntless courage, an iron will, and the faculty of controlling himself and others—these were the qualities which made Parnell leader of the Irish people and arbiter of English parties.

CHAPTER XI

LEADER

Mr. Gladstone was now Prime Minister, Lord Cowper Irish Viceroy, Mr. Forster Chief Secretary. The new Parliament met on April 29. The Queen's Speech dealt with every subject of public importance except the Irish land question. The Government, in truth, did not realise the gravity of the Irish situation. Mr. Gladstone has said with perfect frankness that he thought the Irish question was settled by the Church Act of 1869 and the Land Act of 1870. It troubled him no more. Mr. Bright, however, still felt keenly interested in one branch of the Irish question—the land; but he did not see his way to do anything. On January 9, 1880, he wrote: 'On this question of the land the difficulty would not be great. All might be done which is not of a revolutionary character, and the present time seems favourable for such changes as are possible without violence and by consent of the Imperial Parliament.'[1]

On January 12 he returned to the subject, expressing his doubt as to the practicability of establishing any satisfactory tribunal for fixing 'fair rents.' He said: 'I do not see how what is called a "fair rent" is to be

[1] Private letter.

determined. A "fair rent" to one man would be much more than another could pay, and less than a third man could without imprudence agree to give.'[1]

Lord Hartington also showed some interest in the land question, though, like Mr. Bright, he did not see his way to action. On January 22 he wrote: 'I think that the failure of the Land Act [1870] is not established by the figures which you give. The difference between rentals and the Government valuation in some cases, as well as the increase in the number of notices of ejectment, may be, and I think probably are, capable of some explanation, and so far as I am aware all the cases of cruel evictions on a large scale which are related by you took place before the passing of the Act. I am not opposed to any reasonable or practical proposals for improving the working of the Bright clauses [the purchase clauses] of the Act, but I am of opinion that the difficulties of inducing Parliament to legislate in this direction have been greatly increased by the recent anti-rent agitation. The advice which has been given, and which has to some extent been acted upon, to disregard the contract now existing between landlord and tenant, is not calculated to give Parliament any confident expectation that greater respect will be shown to the contract which it is proposed to create between the State and the tenant purchaser.'[2]

I think it but just to Mr. Bright and Lord Hartington to set out the views which they privately expressed in January 1880. Nevertheless, in April the Liberal Government as a whole thought not of Ireland. 'The Government,' said Lord Cowper, 'were not thinking of the land question when I came to Ireland.' 'The

[1] *Ibid.* [2] *Ibid.*

present Government,' said the Duke of Argyll in 1881, 'was formed with no express intention of bringing in another great Irish Land Bill . . . it formed no part of the programme upon which the Government was formed.'

It is strange that this should have been so. The land question had been kept constantly before Parliament since 1876. Mr. Butt's Bill, based on the three F.'s, was then introduced. It was rejected by 290 against 56 votes.

In 1877 Mr. Crawford, an Ulster Liberal, introduced a Bill to extend the Ulster custom—the right of free sale—through the rest of Ireland. It was talked out. In 1878 Mr. Crawford again introduced the Bill. It was defeated by 85 against 66 votes. Mr. Butt's Bill of 1876 was also re-introduced. It was defeated by 286 against 86 votes. In 1879 Mr. Butt's Bill was again brought in. It was again defeated by 263 to 61 votes; and Mr. Crawford's Bill was again talked out. The land agitation had been growing in intensity since 1877.[1] Sir Stafford Northcote's statement in the House in February 1880 demonstrated the reality of Irish distress. Everything that was happening showed the discontent and the misery of the people. Yet on the meeting of Parliament in April Mr. Gladstone's Government gave no sign that Ireland filled any place in the thoughts of Ministers.

The first appearance of the Irish members in the House of Commons showed that there was still a division in their ranks. Mr. Shaw, with those who had supported him at the public meeting, sat upon one

[1] I have dealt fully with the land controversy in *The Irish Land Question and English Public Opinion* and in the *Parliamentary History of the Irish Land Question*. See also Sir Gavan Duffy, *League of North and South*.

side of the House; Parnell and his party, reviving the practice of the Independent Opposition party of 1852, sat on the other. He said that the Irish Nationalists should always sit in Opposition until the full measure of their demands was conceded. In the last Parliament they had sat in Opposition with the English Liberals. They would now, since the Liberals had succeeded to office, sit in Opposition with the Tories. Thus they would emphasise their position as an independent party, and show that Whigs and Tories were all alike to them.

Mr. Shaw took a different view. The Liberals, he said, were the friends of Ireland. It was, therefore, the duty of the Irish members to support the Liberal Government. He would accordingly adhere to the old custom, and sit on the Liberal side of the House.

This idea of an independent Irish party Parnell constantly said he had got from Gavan Duffy and the Tenant Leaguers of 1852. 'I had some knowledge, not very deep, of Irish history,' he said before the Special Commission, 'and had read about the independent opposition movement of Sir Charles Gavan Duffy and the late Mr. Frederick Lucas in 1852, and whenever I thought about politics I always thought that that would be an ideal movement for the benefit of Ireland. Their idea was an independent party reflecting the opinions of the masses of the people; acting independently in the House of Commons, free from the influence of either English political party; pledged not to take office or form any combination with any English political party until the wants of Ireland had been attended to. The passing of the Ballot Act rendered this possible in my judgment, because for the first time

it enabled the Irish electors to vote free from the coercion of the Irish landlords.'

In the last Parliament Parnell had to fight Butt as well as the British Minister. Now he had to fight Shaw and the 'moderate' Home Rulers. But his task was comparatively easy. In the struggle against Butt he began by having only a handful of Fenians at his back. Now he was supported by a section of the Clan-na-gael, by many of the rank and file of the I. R. B., by the farmers, by the priests, and by the 'Nation' itself, partly a clerical organ. Shaw and the 'moderates' were supported by the bishops and the 'Freeman's Journal.' A new, perhaps unexpected, ally came also to his side—her Majesty's Government. Timely concessions from Ministers would have strengthened the hands of Shaw and the 'moderates,' and might have broken up the union between Fenians, farmers, and priests. The refusal of concession in time consolidated this union, discredited the policy of the 'moderates,' and threw the game into Parnell's hands.

The Parnellite members lost no time in calling the attention of Parliament to Ireland. Mr. O'Connor Power brought in a Bill practically to 'stay evictions.' Under the Land Act of 1870, compensation for disturbance could not be awarded if the 'disturbed' tenant owed a year's rent. Mr. O'Connor Power now proposed that compensation should (under existing circumstances) be awarded in any case of disturbance.

The Government—who, at the beginning of the session, had refused to deal with the land question—were now undecided what to do. They would not support the Parnellite Bill; but, said Mr. Forster, 'I

am not prepared to vote against the principle.' A few days later the Government gave way, and on June 18 Mr. Forster himself, taking up the question, introduced the famous 'Compensation for Disturbance Bill.' This measure proposed that an evicted tenant should be entitled to compensation when he could prove to the satisfaction of the Court—

1. That he was unable to pay the rent.

2. That he was unable to pay it, not from thriftlessness or idleness, but on account of the bad harvest of the current year, or of the two preceding years.

3. That he was willing to continue the tenancy on just and reasonable terms as to rent and otherwise.

4. That these terms were unreasonably refused by the landlord.

Lord Hartington justified this measure in an effective speech.

The Bill, he said, was the logical outcome of the Act of 1870, and had been framed simply with a view of preventing the objects of that Act from being defeated by exceptional circumstances which could not be foreseen. 'In some parts of Ireland the impoverished circumstances of the tenant have placed in the hands of the landlord a weapon which the Government never contemplated, and which enables the landlord, at a sacrifice of half or a quarter of a year's rent, to clear his estate of hundreds of tenants, whom in ordinary circumstances he would not have been able to remove, except at a heavy pecuniary fine.

'I ask whether that is not a weapon calculated to enable landlords absolutely to defeat the main purposes of the Act.

'Supposing a landlord wished to clear the estate of a number of small tenants; he knows that this is the

time to do it, and if he should lose this opportunity he can never have it again, without great pecuniary sacrifice.' But, despite the weight which Lord Hartington carried with all moderate men, many Liberals opposed the Bill. It was, however, read a second time, on July 5, by 295 against 217 votes; 20 Liberals voting against it, and 20 walking out.

The Irish Nationalists to a man supported the Government. Harried by the dissentient members of their own party, Ministers proposed in committee to introduce an amendment, which aroused the hostility of Parnell. The purpose of the amendment was to disallow the tenant's claim to compensation, provided the landlord gave him permission to sell his interest in the holding. 'This is impossible,' said Parnell. 'In the present state of affairs in Ireland no one will buy the tenant right, and,' he added, turning to Mr. Forster, "unstable as water thou shalt not excel."' Parnell was supported by Mr. Charles Russell (now Lord Russell of Killowen, the Lord Chief Justice of England), who denounced the amendment as a 'mockery' and begged the Government to withdraw it. The Government, still wavering, did finally withdraw it, substituting in its place an alteration proposed by Mr. Gladstone (and carried), to the effect that the tenant 'should be entitled to compensation if the landlord had refused the terms set out in the Bill without the offer of any reasonable alternative.' The next crisis in the fate of the Bill was the acceptance by Ministers of a proposal from the Opposition to the effect that the application of the measure should be limited to tenancies not exceeding 15*l.* a year. Parnell protested against this limit, which, under his pressure, was abandoned, a new limit of 30*l.* valuation, equivalent to 42*l.* rent,

being agreed to. The third reading was carried on July 26 by 304 to 237 votes; 16 Liberals voting against the measure, and Parnell and his followers (dissatisfied with the alterations and the 'weakness' of the Government) walking out. The Bill had been under the consideration of the Commons for over a month. The Lords disposed of it in two nights. It was rejected by 282 to 51 votes.

The rejection of this Compensation for Disturbance Bill was the signal for extreme agitation in Ireland.

'Soon after the rejection of the Bill,' says the 'Annual Register,' 'there came most disquieting reports from Ireland. There were riots at evictions; tenants who had ventured to take the place of the evicted occupiers were assaulted, their property damaged, their ricks burned, their cattle maimed; there was a mysterious robbery of arms from a ship lying in Queenstown Harbour; and it was said that a plot had been discovered for the blowing up of Cork Barracks.'

The story of the 'robbery of arms' throws a curious light on the relations between the Fenians and the Land League. In August a party of Fenians attacked a vessel called the 'Juno' in Cork Harbour, and carried off forty cases of firearms. The Constitutionalists in the local branch of the League were much exercised by this act. They were anxious, fearing that some suspicion might rest on their organisation, to vindicate themselves and to show their loyalty. Accordingly, a resolution was proposed by Mr. Cronin and seconded by Mr. J. O'Brien declaring that 'we deeply regret that a robbery of useless old firearms has taken place, that we condemn lawlessness in any shape, and we believe the occurrence must have been effected by those who desire to see a renewal of the Coercion Acts

inflicted upon this country, and who wish to give the Government good value for their secret service money.'

An amendment was moved by an 'advanced man,' Mr. O'Sullivan, who protested against the right of the League to interfere with any other organisation. Mr. O'Sullivan was, however, in a hopeless minority on that day, and the resolution was triumphantly carried. But the Fenians were resolved to teach the Constitutionalists in the League a lesson which should not be forgotten. The matter was at once brought under the notice of the central body in Dublin, when, on August 17, Mr. Brennan, himself a Fenian, condemned the action of the Cork branch, saying that they had no more right to consider the subject of the 'Juno' raid than they had to discuss the relative merits of the candidates for the presidency of the United States. Mr. Dillon, who was the chairman on the occasion, agreed with Mr. Brennan, and said that 'the meeting entirely disclaimed the resolution passed by the Cork branch.' On August 21 there was another meeting of the Cork branch. Mr. John O'Connor attended. Mr. O'Sullivan was again in evidence. He proposed that the resolution of August 13 should be expunged, and it was expunged *nem. con.* However, the incident was not yet closed. On October 3 Parnell visited Cork. As he approached the city an armed party of Fenians stopped the procession, seized Mr. Cronin and Mr. O'Brien, who were in the carriage by his side, carried them off, and detained them for the day. They were resolved that no man who had struck at Fenianism should join in the welcome to Parnell. Soon afterwards the Cork branch of the League was 'reconstructed.'

Meanwhile Parnell had made up his mind to wage

relentless war against the Government. He did not throw all the blame for the rejection of the Compensation Bill on the House of Lords. 'If the Government,' he would say, 'had the people of England behind them the Lords dare not do this. Well, we will stiffen the back of the Government. Then we shall see what the Lords will do.' He told the Ministers that they were half-hearted, that they did not believe in their own measures, that they wanted grit. He called upon them to give assurances of legislation for the next session, else they would receive little help from him. Lord Hartington—who was leading the House in the absence of Mr. Gladstone through serious illness—refused to give assurances, and said the Government had no further concessions to make. Parnell had thrown down the gauntlet. Lord Hartington picked it up. 'War to the knife, sir—war to the knife,' said Biggar. 'The next thing will be a State trial. The Whigs always start with a State trial. Something for the lawyers, you know. Whigs—rogues, sir.'

Returning to Ireland, Parnell flung himself heart and soul into the land agitation. The Government had failed to protect the tenants. The tenants should now protect themselves. The scenes of 1847 should not be re-enacted. No more peasants should be cast on the roadside to die. What the Government had failed to do the Land League would do. But the tenants must rally to the League; they must band themselves together; they must cast aside the weak and cowardly in their ranks, and fight sturdily for their homes and country against the destroying landlords and their ally, the Government of England. This was the doctrine which Parnell and the Leaguers

preached from the hilltops, and which the masses of the people willingly obeyed.

On September 19 Parnell attended a mass meeting at Ennis. There, in a speech which rang throughout the land, he struck the keynote of the agitation; he laid down the lines on which the League should work. Slowly, calmly, deliberately, without a quiver of passion, a note of rhetoric, or an exclamation of anger, but in a tone that penetrated his audience like the touch of cold steel, he proclaimed war against all who should resist the mandates of the League.

'Depend upon it that the measure of the Land Bill next session will be the measure of your activity and energy this winter. It will be the measure of your determination not to pay unjust rents; it will be the measure of your determination to keep a firm grip on your homesteads. It will be the measure of your determination not to bid for farms from which others have been evicted, and to use the strong force of public opinion to deter any unjust men amongst yourselves—and there are many such—from bidding for such farms. Now what are you to do to a tenant who bids for a farm from which his neighbour has been evicted?'

Here there was much excitement, and cries of 'Kill him!' 'Shoot him!' Parnell waited, with his hands clasped behind his back, looking quietly out upon the crowd until the tumult subsided, and then softly resumed: 'Now I think I heard somebody say "Shoot him!"—(A voice: "Yes, quite right")—but I wish to point out to you a very much better way—a more Christian and a more charitable way, which will give the lost sinner an opportunity of repenting.'

Here there were inquiring glances, and a lull, and a

silence, which was scarcely broken until Parnell finished the next sentence—a long sentence, but every word of which was heard, as the voice of the speaker hardened and his face wore an expression of remorseless determination. 'When a man takes a farm from which another has been evicted, you must show him on the roadside when you meet him, you must show him in the streets of the town—(A voice: "Shun him!")—you must show him at the shop counter, you must show him in the fair and in the market-place, and even in the house of worship, by leaving him severely alone, by putting him into a moral Coventry, by isolating him from his kind as if he was a leper of old—you must show him your detestation of the crime he has committed, and you may depend upon it that there will be no man so full of avarice, so lost to shame, as to dare the public opinion of all right-thinking men and to transgress your unwritten code of laws.'

The closing sentence was received with a shout of applause; the doctrine of boycotting, as it afterwards came to be called, was accepted with popular enthusiasm.

Three days afterwards the peasants of Connaught showed how ready they were to practise as Parnell had preached. Captain Boycott, the agent of Lord Erne, had been offered by the tenants on the estate what they conceived to be a just rent. He refused to take it, and the tenants refused to give more; whereupon ejectment processes were issued against them.

On September 22 the process server went forth to serve the ejectments. He was met by a number of peasants, who forced him to abandon the work and retreat precipitately to the agent's house. Next day the peasants visited the house and adjoining farm, and ordered the servants in Captain Boycott's employ to

depart—a mandate which was promptly obeyed; the result being that the unfortunate gentleman was left without farm labourers or stablemen, while his crops remained ungathered and unsaved. Nor did the peasants stop here. They forbade the local shopkeepers to serve him, told the blacksmith and laundress not to work for him, threatened the post-boy who carried his letters, and upon one occasion stopped and 'cautioned' the bearer of a telegram.

Captain Boycott was left 'severely alone,' 'put into moral Coventry.' As days wore on it became a matter of pressing importance to him to have his crops saved, but no one in the neighbourhood could be got to do the work. In these circumstances an opportunity, gladly seized, for 'demonstrating in force' was given to the Ulster Orangemen. One hundred of them offered to 'invade' Connaught to save Captain Boycott's crops. The Captain informed the authorities of Dublin Castle that fifty men would be quite sufficient for agricultural purposes; and being himself a man of peace, he did not feel at all disposed to see a hundred Orangemen marching in battle array over his farm, shouting 'to hell with the Pope,' and drinking the memory of the glorious, pious, and immortal William at his expense. Fifty Orangemen were accordingly despatched to Connaught under the protection of a large force of military and police (with two field pieces) to save Captain Boycott's crops. The work done the Orangemen, accompanied by Captain Boycott, departed in peace, and the Connaught peasants were left masters of the situation.

The 'isolation' of Captain Boycott was followed by another famous case. Mr. Bence Jones, of Clonakilty, in the County Cork, had incurred the popular dis-

pleasure, and was, in the phraseology of the day, boycotted. He tried to sell his cattle in Cork market, but no one could be got to buy. He then sent them to Dublin to be shipped off to the Liverpool markets, but the men in the service of the Dublin Steam Packet Company refused to put them on board. Finally, after a great deal of difficulty, the cattle were taken in small batches across the Channel and sold.

After these cases boycotting became a great weapon in the armoury of the League, and was, as one of the Leaguers said, 'better than any 81-ton gun ever manufactured.'

Parnell's Ennis speech was altogether an agrarian speech. He concentrated himself upon the land, and told the people how the campaign against landlordism was to be carried on. But at Galway, on October 24, he plunged into politics and dealt with the more congenial subject of national freedom: 'I expressed my belief at the beginning of last session that the present Chief Secretary, who was then all smiles and promises, would not have proceeded very far in the duties of his office before he would have found that he had undertaken an impossible task to govern Ireland, and that the only way to govern Ireland was to allow her to govern herself.' (Cheers.)

A voice. 'A touch of the rifle.'

'And if they prosecute the leaders of this movement——'

A voice. 'They dare not.'

Parnell. 'If they prosecute the leaders of this movement it is not because they want to preserve the lives of one or two landlords. Much the English Government cares about the lives of one or two landlords.'

A voice. 'Nor we.'

Another voice. 'Away with them.'

Parnell. 'But it will be because they see that behind this movement lies a more dangerous movement to their hold over Ireland; because they know that if they fail in upholding landlordism here—and they will fail—they have no chance of maintaining it over Ireland; it will be because they know that if they fail in upholding landlordism in Ireland, their power to misrule Ireland will go too.' (Cheers.) Then he uttered one of those sentences which, coming straight from the heart, and disclosing the real thoughts and feelings which animated him, burned themselves into the minds of his hearers. 'I wish to see the tenant farmers prosperous; but large and important as this class of tenant farmers is, constituting, as they do, with their wives and families, the majority of the people of the country, I would not have taken off my coat and gone to this work if I had not known that we were laying the foundation in this movement for the regeneration of our legislative independence. (Cheers.) Push on, then, towards this goal, extend your organisation, and let every tenant farmer, while he keeps a grip on his holding, recognise also the great truth that he is serving his country and the people at large, and helping to break down English misrule in Ireland.'

The Land League now grew in importance and influence day by day. Money poured into its treasury, not only from Ireland, but from America. Its branches extended all over the country. Its mandates were everywhere obeyed. It was, in truth, nothing more nor less than a provisional Irish Government, stronger, because based on popular suffrage, than the Government

of the Castle. 'Self-elected, self-constituted, self-assembled, self-adjourned, acknowledging no superior, tolerating no equal, interfering in all stages with the administration of justice, levying contributions and discharging all the functions of regular government, it obtained a complete mastery and control over the masses of the Irish people.'

So Canning described the Catholic Association. So might the Ministers of the day have described (so in effect they did describe) the Land League.

'Things are now come to that pass that the question is whether O'Connell or I shall govern Ireland'—so said the Irish Viceroy, Lord Anglesea, in 1831. And Lord Cowper might have said in 1880: 'The question is whether Parnell or I shall govern Ireland.'

While Parnell, helped by the Fenian Treasurer Egan [1] and the Fenian Secretary Brennan, was driving the League ahead in Ireland, Davitt was forming branches throughout the United States.

There was still a party in the Clan-na-Gael opposed to the new departure. The Clan-na-Gael man who had come to England in 1878 to see Parnell, and who was then favourably disposed to an alliance between the Revolutionists and the Constitutionalists, had now gone quite round. In addition to his hostility to the policy of Devoy and Davitt, he had formed an intense dislike to Parnell, and was resolved, so far as he could, to break off all relations with the Parliamentarians. Davitt, who always kept himself well

[1] Egan has been described by the late Mr. A. M. Sullivan in *New Ireland*. 'He seldom or never made a speech. He aspired to no display on the platform, but was the ablest strategist of the whole campaign, and perhaps, except Davitt, the most resolute and invincible spirit amongst them all.'

posted in the American news, soon learned that things were not going quite smoothly on the other side of the Atlantic. In May he sailed for New York, to co-operate with Devoy in defeating their opponents in the Clan. The supreme council of the I. R. B. were also aware that a party of American Fenians led by the Clan-na-Gael man shared their views about the inadvisability of working with the Constitutionalists, and they had previously despatched the prominent Fenian of the Craven Street meeting to defeat Davitt's plans. A meeting of the council of the Clan was called in New York to hear both Davitt and this Fenian.

The proceedings were opened by the Clan-na-Gael man, who moved a resolution severing all connection between the Clan and the Parliamentarians. Parnell was not to be trusted. He would simply use them for his own purposes, and throw them over at the first opportunity. What were they asked to do? Practically to supply funds for parliamentary agitation. The thing was absurd. They would keep their funds for their own organisation, and concentrate themselves upon it. The Parliamentarians had everything to gain by uniting with them. They had nothing to gain by uniting with the Parliamentarians. That was the Clan-na-gael man's case. Davitt replied. He said that Fenianism had lost ground by holding aloof from public movements in Ireland. The Fenians ought to keep themselves in touch with all that was going on. They should try to influence every movement and to gain support from all quarters. The land was the question of the hour. Was it to be left wholly in the hands of the Constitutionalists? The farmers would be the friends of the men who helped them in this crisis of their fate, and no movement could be successful in Ireland unless the farmers were at its

back. How were they to gain the farmers? By throwing themselves into the land agitation, by identifying their cause with the cause of the tenants.

The prominent Fenian attacked Davitt. He said that the new departure was immoral and impolitic. Fenians and Constitutionalists were to be combined in one movement. There was to be a pretence of loyalty, but in reality treason all along the line. The upshot of this arrangement would be sham loyalty and sham treason. He did not believe in a policy of dust-throwing and lying, but that was the policy of the new departure. The Fenian movement was purely a national movement. If he were to stand absolutely alone, he would resist this dishonest and unholy alliance. 'Freedom comes from God's right hand,' and he, at all events, believed in righteous means as well as in righteous ends.

A division was then taken on the Clan-na-Gael man's motion, and it was defeated. The prominent Fenian had beaten Davitt in 1879. Davitt had his revenge in 1880.

The founder of the Land League, as Davitt has been called, next made a tour throughout the States, forming branches of the League and 'spreading the light.' All his public utterances—and he addressed many meetings—resolved themselves into two main arguments:

1. The cause of the tenant farmers was just in itself and ought to be supported.

2. The destruction of landlordism would lead to the overthrow of the English power in Ireland.

Two extracts may be given from his speeches to illustrate their character. Speaking at Chicago in August, he said, referring to the raid on the 'Juno':

'The convulsion of horror which grew out of it was because the English Government knew there were men in Ireland to-day absolutely feverish to clutch hundreds and thousands of rifles, in order, not only to abolish Irish landlordism, but to consummate the hopes of Irishmen by abolishing something else.'

At Kansas City, in September, he said: 'We have, as you have already been told, declared an unceasing war against landlordism; not a war to call on our people to shoulder the rifle and to go out in the open field and settle the question that is now agitating Ireland—although I am not opposed to a settlement of that nature providing I could see a chance of success—but for the fourth time during the present century we have tried a physical struggle with England, and instead of hurting England we have generally hurt ourselves. Now I believe it is far better to meet on different ground and to do battle in a different mode. And in declaring this war against Irish landlordism, in not paying rent in order to bring down the garrison in Ireland, we know we are doing a proper work. We are preparing the way for that independence which you enjoy in this great American republic.'

In America Davitt formed a fast friendship with Patrick Ford, the proprietor of the 'Irish World,' who defended the policy of the new departure, collected funds for the Land League, and preached a furious crusade against England.

The 'Irish World' was circulated freely in Ireland, and it must be confessed that a more inflammable production could scarcely be placed in the hands of the people. A few extracts from its columns may be given to make the point clearer.

'England's mode of warfare. What is it? Ask the biographer of Cromwell, ask the Ghoorkas of India, ask the signers of the Declaration of Independence. Listen! She has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burned our towns, and destroyed the lives of the people. This is the testimony of the men of '76. Ask the American historian of the War of 1812. Ask every unfortunate people upon whom England has ever breathed her unwholesome breath, and in whose midst her ruffian soldiery have planted her robber flag. The answer is all the same.'

In June 1880 the following passage appeared: 'Some think it is an open question whether the political agent called dynamite was first commissioned in Russia, or first in Ireland. Well, it is not of much consequence which of the two countries takes precedence in this onward step towards civilisation. Still, we claim the merit for Ireland. True the introductory blast was blown in England, and in the very centre of the enemy's head-quarters. But the work itself was no doubt done by one or two Irish hands, which settles both the claim and the priority.'

In October its correspondent 'Transatlantic' wrote: 'The Irish Land League is accepted by the Irish people at home and abroad as the faithful friend, philosopher, and guide. I am thoroughly grieved to find existing among my American friends, and my Dublin friends also, a disposition to quarrel with the trustees of the Skirmishing Fund[1] in New York, because they advanced 1,000 or 2,000 dollars over a year ago from the Skirmishing Fund to help to start

[1] This fund was formed by O'Donovan Rossa and Ford for the purpose of employing agents to lay English cities in ashes.—*Report of Special Commission*, p. 60.

the anti-rent agitation in Ireland. No possible application of a portion of the fund would to my mind be more legitimate, more in accordance with the desire of us all to help on towards the deliverance of our downtrodden people. That little bit of seed, the first advance from the Skirmishing Fund, has worked as great a miracle as the grain of mustard seed spoken of in the Sacred Scripture. Behold now 200 Land League branches established through Ireland with at east 500 members in each, and all in full cry against the land robbers. Behold almost as many more co-operating branches established in America, Canada, Australia, and in England, Scotland, and Wales. Will any man tell me that this movement will die out without lifting Ireland to a vantage ground on which she may declare and maintain her separate political existence? Wait till the numbers of the Land League branches swell to 300,000. Wait till they are enlightened with political knowledge, instructed in military drill, and armed with rifles, bullets, and buck-shot. One or two years more will work wonders.

'Don't quarrel, friends, about 1,000 dollars or 2,000 dollars. . . . I pray and urge my friends at home and abroad to drop the controversy, and to unite against the common enemies of our people, the landlords of Ireland and of England, with their forces of armed men at their backs!'

While Davitt was helping to 'spread the light'[1] in America the state of Ireland was growing desperate.

[1] On May 5 Davitt cabled to Ford: 'Copies of *Irish World* shall be sent to all parts of Ireland. Bishop Moran, of Ossory (a nephew of Cardinal Cullen) denounced it and the Land League. May Heaven open his eyes to the truth; "Spread the light."'

The people in the western districts were starving. 'I must say,' wrote General Gordon, who visited the country in the winter of 1880, 'from all accounts and my own observation, that the state of our fellow-countrymen in the parts I have named is worse than that of any people in the world, let alone Europe. I believe these people are made as we are; that they are patient beyond belief; loyal, but broken spirited and desperate; lying on the verge of starvation in places where we would not keep cattle.' It rained evictions, it rained outrages. Cattle were houghed and maimed; tenants who paid unjust rents, or took farms from which others had been evicted, were dragged out of their beds, assaulted, sometimes forced to their knees, while shots were fired over their heads to make them promise submission to the popular desires in future. Bands of peasants scoured the country, firing into the houses of obnoxious individuals. Graves were dug before the doors of evicting landlords. Murder was committed. A reign of terror had in truth commenced.[1]

What were they doing at Dublin Castle all this time? Lord Cowper and Mr. Forster fully realised the gravity of the situation. Neither was quite out of sympathy with the demands of the tenant farmers. Both desired a policy of concession to a certain extent. 'If you pass the Bill' [the Compensation for Disturbance Bill], Mr. Forster had said in the House of Commons,

[1] The following table will show the increase of evictions and outrages from 1877 to 1880 (inclusive):

Year	Evictions (Persons)	Year	Agrarian Outrages
1877	2,177	1877	236
1878	4,679	1878	301
1879	6,239	1879	863
1880	10,457	1880	2,590

'it will put out the fire.' The Bill was not passed. The fire blazed up with increased and increasing fury. How was it to be 'put out' now? The House of Lords would have no concessions. What was the alternative? Coercion, pure and simple. The Land League had, in fact, become a rival Government. If the Queen's authority were to prevail, no choice remained but to crush the League. The question really was, whether Lord Cowper or Parnell should rule Ireland, for both the Viceroy and the Chief Secretary recognised that Parnell was the centre of disturbance.

'When I was in Ireland,' says Lord Cowper, 'we considered Mr. Parnell the centre of the whole movement. We thought him the chief, if not the only, danger. We feared him because he had united all the elements of discontent, because we never knew what he would be up to, and we felt that he would stop at nothing. I certainly thought that his aim was separation. I thought that he used agrarian discontent for separatist purposes. There was very little said about Home Rule at that time. It was all agrarianism, with separation in the background, and Parnell was the centre of everything.

'He had no second, no one at all near him. I should say that the next man to him was Davitt; but he was a long way off. Mr. Healy was, I think, coming to the front then. We thought him clever, but he did not trouble us much. Mr. Dillon was better known, and he used to go about the country making speeches. But our view of him was that somehow he was always putting his foot in it. Our attention was concentrated on Parnell. We did not think he instigated outrages. We thought that he connived at them. We thought that he would stop

at nothing to gain his end, and, as I have said, we believed his end was separation. I think he was very English. He had neither the virtues nor the vices of an Irishman. His very passion was English, his coolness was English, his reserve was English.'

In September or October Lord Cowper and Mr. Forster came to the conclusion that the Government could not be carried on by the ordinary law. Still they were reluctant to take extreme measures until it was patent to every law abiding and loyal citizen that extreme measures could alone meet the exigencies of the case.

The suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act was an old familiar 'remedy.' The officials at Dublin Castle had been accustomed to govern in a state of siege. Landlords, magistrates, police officers, judges, privy councillors—all the loyal and ruling classes—cried out with one voice: 'Suspend the Habeas Corpus Act or the country will be ruined.' 'Everyone,' says Lord Cowper, 'advised us to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act; the Lords-Lieutenant of Counties, the police, the law officers. The police said they knew all the people who got up outrages; and that if the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended they could arrest them all.' Nevertheless, Lord Cowper and Mr. Forster still hesitated. 'We shall first,' they said in effect, 'make an effort to put down disorder by enforcing the ordinary law. We shall prosecute the Leaguers. If the jury refuse to convict on the plain facts which we shall produce, then it will be clear to every reasonable and loyal man that the administration of the country cannot be carried on unless we are invested with extraordinary powers.

'If trial by jury breaks down, manifestly the only

remedy is suspension of trial by jury, but trial by jury first.'

Lord Cowper placed his views before the Cabinet and before Mr. Gladstone personally in a series of able communications, some of which I shall now set out:

Lord Cowper to the Cabinet

[Early in October 1880.]

'There has been an immense increase of agrarian crime. Men who have taken farms from which others have been evicted have in many cases been intimidated into throwing them up, and of those who remain a large number are under police protection. Meetings denouncing in strong language the very class which has been subject to this outrage and intimidation have at the same time been held throughout the country, and it seems reasonable to connect the meetings with the increase of crime. In spite of the fact that some of the speakers have dissuaded their hearers from committing murder, and of the suggestion that if freedom of speech were stopped secret associations would derive increased strength, it is my opinion that the meetings cause more crime than they prevent.

'I would preserve freedom of speech to the very utmost as long as it is confined to general subjects, such as abuse of England, abuse of the Government, or advocacy of political measures, however impracticable; when it has the immediate effect of endangering the lives or property of individuals, it should be stopped. One would wish to check it either by stopping meetings, or only prosecuting the promoters of meetings or the principal speakers. Can this be done? We might, it is true, have stopped the Charleville meeting, because

a particular farm was named in the placard and the occupier denounced; but this mentioning of a name was a slip which is not likely to be made again. We could not stop other meetings. As to speeches. No speech has yet been made in the presence of a Government reporter for which the speaker could be prosecuted. Government reporters can only be sent to a limited number of places, and these speakers, knowing that they are now being watched very carefully, will become more cautious. Even if the occupier of a farm is mentioned in a placard, and subsequent to the issue of that placard throws up the farm, the person responsible cannot be prosecuted, as is evident from the answer of the law officers to the question about the Riversdale case. From all this it appears that we shall probably never have an opportunity of either stopping a meeting, or prosecuting a speaker, or issuer of a placard. If we think that agitation ought to be stopped it appears there is only one possible way. A combination to prevent persons from taking evicted farms or purchasing stock, &c., is illegal. We have not yet obtained a decided opinion upon the question whether the Land League is such a combination, but it would appear to be so. If so, it would also appear that its president or its leading members could be prosecuted. Such a course would have the advantage of striking at the head. It would fix the attention of the whole country from its announcement till its conclusion and divert the minds of the leaders of the League from their ordinary work, such as intimidating landlords and agents and the takers of farms from which men have been evicted. It would show the determination of the Government to stop the present state of things. If the prosecution failed through the perversity of the

jury, it would give a reason for asking for stronger powers. The prosecution of the Land League, if possible, seems desirable in itself, but its chief recommendation is that it appears to be the only alternative to doing nothing. The proposed new Land Bill will be much more likely to have a good effect if it follows a strong blow against agitation than if it appears to result from it.'

Lord Cowper to Mr. Gladstone

[October 20, 1880.]

'DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,—Though you are in constant communication with Forster, and though he and I take pretty much the same views, perhaps you would not object to an occasional line from me saying what I think and giving what information I can.

'Spencer will have shown you the statistics of crime, and you will have seen that outrages are very numerous, and will have gathered that they will probably increase. But the peculiarity of the present state of Ireland seems to me to lie not so much in the number of outrages as in the general ill-feeling among the tenants. I gather from all sources, including men of Liberal politics, and who would naturally support the Government, such as Colonel Dease, my Chamberlain, Cork's agent, Leahy, and Kenmare's agent, Hussey, that there never has been such a state of panic on one side and lawlessness and ill-will on the other. The police fully confirm this. Of course, what strikes me is the universal sympathy of the population with the criminals, and the impossibility of bringing to justice any one member of large gangs of men who do not even, on some occasions, take the precaution of disguising themselves. This, how-

ever, is not what most impresses those who know the country, for the difficulty of detecting a criminal[1] seems always to have existed. What strikes them most is the bitterness of feeling against all landlords and agents, and most of all against all those who have lately taken farms, even in cases where the previous tenant had owed three or four years' rent and was himself quite willing to leave. It seems really to be the case that in four or five counties none of these classes feel their lives to be safe, and the mischief is rapidly spreading. Tenants are also afraid to pay more than the Government valuation, or any other sum ordered. As to this point a crisis will probably arise in about a fortnight or three weeks. Most rents are due on November 1, and will be collected immediately after. We shall then see what happens. Many people expect a general refusal.

'The state of feeling which I have described is by the class which suffers from it universally ascribed to the Land League, and I have been repeatedly assured that places which were peaceful and contented before become very different after a meeting. If this is the case the population must be very inflammable, but it certainly is the general impression. I do not know whether you were surprised or annoyed by the news of the impending prosecution having oozed out. I have been inclined to look upon it as a lucky accident. It would, of course, have been better to have struck at once, but as this could not be done the announcement that we intend to strike appears to me the next best thing. The knowledge that the Government intends to do something has, I think, rather moderated the

[1] An agrarian criminal.

language of one party, and certainly mitigated the panic of the other.'

On November 2 the Government 'struck.' An information was on that day filed in the Crown Office of the Queen's Bench, Dublin, against the Land League for conspiracy to prevent the payment of rent, to resist the process of ejectment, to prevent the taking of farms from which tenants had been evicted, and to create ill-will among her Majesty's subjects.

The defendants named in the information were: Charles Stewart Parnell, M.P.; John Dillon, M.P.; Joseph G. Biggar, M.P.; T. D. Sullivan, M.P.; Thomas Sexton, M.P.; Patrick Egan (Treasurer), Thomas Brennan (Secretary), Michael O'Sullivan (Assistant Secretary), M. P. Boyton (Organiser), Matthew Harris (Organiser), J. Nally, P. J. Gordon, John W. Walsh, P. Sheridan.

The determination of the Government to prosecute the League produced no effect on Parnell. He knew that a conviction was practically impossible; the jury might disagree; they might acquit him. In either case the League would be triumphant. Two days after the information had been filed he referred to the matter with contemptuous brevity at a public meeting in Dublin.

'I regret,' he said, 'that Mr. Forster has chosen rather to waste his time, the money of Government, and our money in these prosecutions. He has begun in a bad way, and I fear that the result of his attempt to govern Ireland on these lines will be to shatter his reputation for statesmanship which he formerly acquired in another branch. He is surrounded by a landlord atmosphere at the Castle of Dublin, and although he may be able to resist the effect of that

atmosphere longer than most men, yet, sooner or later, it is bound to tell on him.'

About the same time he told the people of Limerick, when they presented him with the freedom of the city, that no reliance could be placed 'permanently' on an Irish party at Westminster.

'I am not one of those,' he said in a remarkable utterance, 'who believe in the permanence of an Irish party in the English Parliament. I feel convinced that, sooner or later, the influence which every English Government has at its command—the powerful and demoralising influence—sooner or later will sap the best party you can return to the House of Commons. I don't think we ought to rely too much on the permanent independence of an Irish party sitting at a distance from their constituencies, or legislating, or attempting to legislate, for Ireland at Westminster. But I think it possible to maintain the independence of our party by great exertions and by great sacrifices on the part of the constituencies of Ireland, while we are making a short, sharp, and I trust decisive, struggle for the restoration of our legislative independence.'

I met Mr. Patrick Egan while the legal proceedings were pending. He was full of glee, for he anticipated a crowning victory. 'When this prosecution breaks down,' said he, 'we ought to make Forster an honorary member of the League.' Biggar, however, was seriously angry. 'D——d lawyers, sir,' said he. 'D——d lawyers. Wasting the public money, wasting the public money. Whigs—rogues; Forster d——d fool.'

Lord Cowper scarcely expected that the prosecution would succeed, and warned the Cabinet that they must be prepared to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act:

Lord Cowper to Cabinet [abridged]

'The state of the country is undoubtedly most serious. Nor do the number of outrages by any means represent the [gravity of the situation], and for this reason: that in many places . . . those who would profit [by outrages] are complete masters of the situation, and their temptation, therefore, is removed. Nobody dares to evict. Tenants of evicted farms, even those who have been in possession for more than a year, are daily giving them up. Eighty persons are under police protection. We cannot yet say for certain how far the autumn rents will be paid, but it appears already that in many places tenants have refused to pay more than Government valuation. Landlords will not agree to this, they will evict, and then a great increase of outrages may be expected. It will then be too late to give us extra powers. If they are to be conferred, the decision must be come to at once.

'Her Majesty's Government may well be reluctant to repeat once more the dreary old story of special restrictive legislation for Ireland, the evil of which has so often been exposed. I cannot regard it as an error to have trusted, even for a short period, to the common law for the maintenance of order in this country. And if we could be sure of going through the coming winter with no greater amount of outrage than we have now, large as that amount is, so great is my detestation of coercive measures that I should hesitate to recommend them. But I feel strongly that there is nothing to prevent outrages from largely increasing at any moment both in number and atrocity, and if this should be the case

I should reproach myself for the rest of my life with not having put my opinion on record that, in the present state of feeling, the law is not strong enough as it stands. For the ordinary law to be sufficient to repress crime it is necessary that the majority of the population be on the side of the injured person, and in the disturbed parts of Ireland the vast majority are, in cases of an agrarian nature, invariably on the side of the criminal. In spite, then, of all my wishes being that we could trust to the ordinary law, I must repeat my conviction that to make up our minds to face the winter without stronger powers would be very dangerous. If her Majesty decides upon coercive legislation, what form is it to take? . . . The one remedy suggested by every landlord and every agent is the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act; and though the opinion of one class, particularly when in a great state of alarm and indignation, should certainly not be held conclusive as to the necessity of strong measures, it may nevertheless, if strong measures are resolved upon, be a good guide as to what direction they should take. The same remedy as to the whole of Connaught except Sligo is recommended by the police inspectors in their answer to a recent circular. Authority would therefore point to a suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act as the proper remedy, and common sense would appear to make the same suggestion. The sudden imprisonment of some of those who are known to instigate or to commit these crimes would strike general terror in a way that nothing else would, for no man would know how far he was suspected or whether his own turn might not come next. . . .'

Lord Cowper to Mr. Gladstone

'November 13, 1880.

'I am more convinced every day and every hour of the necessity of suspending the Habeas Corpus Act and having an Arms Bill. The fear of being unduly influenced by the strong current of public feeling in favour of coercion, and a vivid conception of what a glorious triumph it would have been to get through the winter with nothing but the ordinary law, have prevented me from giving an opinion until the other day, and perhaps even then made me give it in too undecided a manner. You have all the statistics before you, and everything that can explain them; and, with Mr. Forster at hand to answer every question and give information of all kinds, you will very likely think a letter from me unnecessary. But I write more to relieve my own mind than anything else. What impresses me most is the conviction that there is absolutely nothing to prevent sudden outbursts of the worst kind. I do not know that it is an exaggeration to say that something like a general massacre of all landlords and agents not under police protection is a conceivable and possible event.

'Of course I do not mean that this is probable, but how can we say it might not happen? The longer a suspension is put off, the more doubtful will it be whether the mischief has not got beyond the stage in which it can be cured by the arrest of a few important people; certainly, in order to have the desired effect more people would have to be arrested now than a short time ago—and more still in another month.'

Lord Cowper to Mr. Gladstone

'November 23, 1880.

'You know my apprehensions as to an outbreak of crime in this country. I must repeat that there is nothing to prevent this, and if it does take place it will be because the landlords are afraid of exercising their power, and because the greater part of the country is under the absolute dominion of the Land League and all rights of property are at an end.

'The remedy, and the only remedy, for this state of things is, I feel quite sure, the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. I have been anxiously considering during the last few days whether, holding this opinion, I am justified in retaining the position of Lord Lieutenant unless this remedy is provided. I am most unwilling to have the appearance of leaving the ship in the middle of the storm. I feel, also, as regards myself, that to resign now would be to put an end for ever to anything in the shape of a public career.

'I had given up all hope of this till your offer to me last May of the high place I occupy made me feel I had an unexpected chance which it would be a great sacrifice for me to forfeit. I can honestly say that it is a great source of pride and pleasure to me to serve in the Government of one whom I have always regarded with such feelings of admiration. What, however, has most weighed with me is a sense of the embarrassment my retirement would cause others.

'I feel that if I went Mr. Forster's position would become almost untenable, all the more so as I know him to hold the same opinion as I do. Putting everything together, I have come to the conclusion that I will not do anything until January, but that if then I

see no possibility of changing my mind as to the necessity of a suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and if it is not granted, I will place my resignation in your hands.'

Mr. Gladstone to Lord Cowper

'November 24.

'I am persuaded, after reading your letter of yesterday, that in a very difficult case you have arrived at a wise conclusion. For my own part I incline to the belief that an outbreak of secessions from the Government either way, at this particular moment, when the double question of order and of land reform is at issue, would render it impossible for us to effect any good solution of that question in its twofold branches.

'It is with regret, and perhaps with mortification, that I see the question of land reform again assuming or having assumed its large proportions. My desire certainly would have been to remain on the lines of the Act of 1870, if not exactly as it passed, such as (I speak of the occupying clauses) it left the House of Commons. It is needless to inquire in what proportions the scarcity, or the agitation, or the Disturbances Bill, or (last, not least) the rejection of that Bill may have brought about the result; for there it is. I think that on this side of the Channel we feel not less really, if less acutely, than you in Dublin the pain, the embarrassment, and discredit of the present condition of Ireland. Acquiescence in its continuance for even a few weeks seems to me dependent on these conditions:

'1. That the disturbance so largely affecting property and causing terror should not assume the form of a great increase in crime affecting life.

'2. That by means of this delay we put ourselves

in a position to propose with authority as a united Government a remedy applicable to the whole of the mischief.

'The paralysis of very important rights affecting the tenure of land is the special characteristic of the present mischief in Ireland, and it may be right to apply a thorough remedy a little later rather than a partial (indeed, as I think, a very doubtful) remedy a little, and only a little, sooner. What I personally think a very doubtful remedy is a suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act proposed alone, carried after much delay, in the teeth of two-thirds of the representatives of Ireland (without taking British allies into account), and used in order to cope with a wide-spreading conspiracy embracing in certain districts large fractions of the population, and largely armed with means other than material for action. You may rely upon it that, when the time you indicate arrives, the Cabinet will look at the duty of defending proprietary rights without any mawkish susceptibilities, and the suspension, should you and Forster then still see cause to desire it, will be most impartially entertained. For my own part, what I lean to expecting is, that if requisite it will not be sufficient, and that we may have to legislate directly against the Land League, not against its name only, but against the purpose of all combinations aiming at the non-payment of debts and non-fulfilment of contracts at the very least, when these illegal aims are so pursued as to endanger the public security.'

Lord Cowper to Mr. Gladstone

'December 12.

'In my letter of November 23 I said that I had come to the conclusion that if in January I saw no possi-

bility of changing my opinion as to the necessity of a suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and if it was not granted, I should feel it my duty to place my resignation in your hands. I am sorry to say that I have not been able to change my opinion, and all chance of my doing so may be considered at an end.

'The state of the country becomes worse every day. Outrages have increased, and the Land League has taken a much deeper root. . . . I feel very strongly that Parliament ought to be called together without delay.'

The day after this letter was written the State trial began. It lasted twenty days before two judges—Mr. Justice Fitzgerald and Mr. Justice Barry—and a jury. At half-past one o'clock on Tuesday, January 25, 1881, the jury retired to consider their verdict. At half-past five they returned to court. 'Have you agreed to your verdict, gentlemen?' asked the clerk of the crown. 'No,' answered the foreman. 'Is there any likelihood of your agreeing?' asked the judge. 'Not a bit, my lord,' said the foreman; and he added, amid a burst of laughter, 'we are unanimous that we cannot agree.' The jury were sent back to their room for a couple of hours more; they came into court again at half-past seven. 'Well, gentlemen,' said the judge, 'have you agreed?' 'No, my lord,' said the foreman, 'and there is no good in keeping us here any longer; we'll never agree.' 'We are ten to two, my lord,' said an indiscreet juror, with the look of a man who had a grievance; and the gallery rang with applause. 'Let the jury be discharged,' ordered the judge; 'we shall not force an agreement.'

Parnell, who was in court, hastened from the scene.

His appearance in the hall was the signal for another outburst of applause, and as he jumped on an outside car and drove rapidly off to catch the boat for England, the crowd on the quay cheered vociferously, shouting 'Long live the Chief!'

'The Land League,' cabled Parnell to the 'Irish World,' 'has scored a victory. The ten to two disagreement of the jury is everywhere accepted as having the force of an acquittal. Thanks to the "Irish World" and its readers for their constant co-operation and substantial support in our good cause. Let them have no fear of its ultimate success.'

Brennan, the secretary of the League, cabled about the same time (February 2) to the 'Irish World': '£1,000 cabled this week by "Irish World" is received.'

The result of the trial was received with a blaze of approbation. Bonfires were lit on every hill, meetings were called in every district, resolutions of triumph and confidence were everywhere passed. The first move of the Government was a blunder. It served only to consolidate the strength of the League.

I shall close this chapter with some account of a non-political function which Parnell attended in the autumn of 1880. I shall let Mr. Horgan, who took a leading part at the function, tell the story.

'In the summer of 1880 I was engaged to be married. One evening I took my intended wife to the House of Commons. She went to the Ladies' Gallery. I had some business to do with Parnell. He and I walked up and down one of the corridors for some time, talking over business matters. That done, I said to him, "Mr. Parnell, I am going to be married." "Quite right, Horgan," said he, placing

his hand on my shoulder; "I am glad to hear it." I thought I should like to ask him to come to my wedding, but I didn't know how he would take it. He was, however, so very pleasant and friendly this evening that I mustered up courage, and, faith, a good deal to my surprise, found myself saying, "I would feel very proud, Mr. Parnell, if you would come to my wedding." "Certainly, Horgan," said he, in the most off-hand manner. When he consented to this I thought I might ask him to do anything. "Mr. Parnell," said I, "will you think it presumptuous of me if I ask you to be my best man?" He looked amused, smiled, and said quickly, "With pleasure, Horgan; and now you must introduce me to your intended wife." I told him she was in the Ladies' Gallery. We went up. I introduced him. He talked away pleasantly, took her over the House, said smilingly "he was glad Horgan was going to have someone to take care of him," and was altogether perfectly charming. I was married at the Redemptorist Church, Clapham, on August 7. Eleven o'clock was the hour fixed for the ceremony. The rumour had got abroad that Parnell was coming to the wedding, and the church and the street were crowded with people anxious to see him. As the hour approached I felt very nervous, for I thought he might not turn up, or that at all events he might not turn up in time. Indeed, I thought I would be a lucky fellow if he arrived at twelve or one o'clock. I stood at the church door on the lookout. At about ten minutes to eleven a carriage and pair dashed up to the door, and there was Parnell, dressed magnificently and looking so handsome and dignified. Every head was uncovered as he stepped out of the carriage, with the air of an emperor, and walked up to me. "Ah, Horgan," he

said, "you look nervous (which I was very). Come and have a glass of champagne; that's what you want. We have plenty of time." We went to an hotel close by and we had a pint of champagne, which was what I wanted. We then returned to the church. He was very attentive during the ceremony, knelt down, and showed every respect and reverence. Afterwards he signed the register. Then I thought he would dash off, glad to be rid of us. Not a bit of it. He came to the luncheon, entered quite into the spirit of the whole business, and did not leave until my wife and I drove away. There was a great deal of kindness in the man, despite his coldness and reserve. The wedding must have bored him terribly, but he came because it gave pleasure to others.'

CHAPTER XII

COERCION AND REDRESS

BEFORE the State trials had commenced the Cabinet resolved to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act in Ireland. The decision was arrived at reluctantly. Mr. Gladstone was opposed to coercion. Mr. Chamberlain was opposed to it. Mr. Bright detested it. But the demands of the Irish Executive were imperative. The question was practically coercion or resignation; and Bright, Chamberlain, and Gladstone ultimately yielded to the importunities of Dublin Castle. The determination of the Ministers was foreshadowed in the Speech from the Throne:

'I grieve to state that the social condition of [Ireland] has assumed an alarming character. Agrarian crimes in general have multiplied far beyond the experience of recent years. Attempts upon life have not grown in the same proportion as other offences, but I must add that efforts have been made for personal protection far beyond all former precedent by the police under the direction of the Executive. I have to notice other evils yet more widely spread; the administration of justice has been frustrated with respect to these offences through the impossibility of procuring evidence, and an extended system of terror has thus been established in various parts of the country which

has paralysed alike the exercise of private rights and the performance of civil duties. In a state of things new in some important respects, and hence with little available guidance from former precedent, I have deemed it right steadily to put in use the ordinary powers of the law before making any new demand. But a demonstration of their insufficiency, amply supplied by the present circumstances, leads me now to apprise you that proposals will be immediately submitted to you for entrusting me with additional powers, necessary, in my judgment, not only for the vindication of order and public law, but likewise to secure, on behalf of my subjects, protection for life and property.'

Thus the Queen's Speech.

Parnell prepared for action. The Government might, he said, carry their coercive measures, but it would be only after a struggle which they should never forget.

In the thick of the fight he cabled to the 'Irish World': 'The fight the Irish members are making for the liberties of the people is inspiring and strengthening every Irishman. We are now in the thick of the conflict. The present struggle against coercion will, please God, be such as never has been seen within the walls of Parliament.'

The 'Times' once said that Parnell might prophesy with safety, because he had the power of fulfilling his prophecies. This particular prophecy was at all events fulfilled to the letter. In 1883 there was a memorable struggle over Grey's Coercion Bill. Then the debate on the Address lasted five nights, the debate on the first reading six nights, the debate on the second reading two nights, and six nights were spent in committee. That record was now beaten. In 1881

the debate on the Address lasted eleven nights, the debate on the first reading five, and even then the Bill was only 'read' by a *coup de main*. The debate on the second reading lasted four nights, ten nights were spent in committee, and two on the third reading.

Forster's case may be stated in a few words. The Land League, the centre of disturbance, was 'supreme.' It was necessary its powers should be crippled. They could only be crippled by investing the Executive with extraordinary powers. The wretches who committed the outrages—'village tyrants,' 'dissolute ruffians'—were known to the police. If the Habeas Corpus Act were suspended they would all be arrested and the disorder would be stopped. It gave him the keenest sorrow, he declared, to ask for extraordinary powers. This had been to him a most 'painful duty,' he added with pathetic honesty. 'I never expected I should have to discharge it. If I had thought that this duty would devolve on the Irish Secretary, I would never have held office; if I could have foreseen that this would have been the result of twenty years of parliamentary life, I would have left Parliament rather than have undertaken it. But I never was more clear than I am now that it is my duty. I never was more clear that the man responsible, as I am, for the administration of the government of Ireland ought no longer to have any part or share in any Government which does not fulfil its first duty—the protection of person and property and the security of liberty.'

Parnell's answer may be given briefly too. The public opinion of Ireland was at the back of the League. The policy of the Government was the coercion of a nation. The people suffered wrongs. The Government admitted it. Let these wrongs be

redressed, and peace would be restored; but no amount of coercion would force the Irish people to submit to unjust and cruel laws. Let evictions be stopped and crime would disappear. 'What a spectacle have we? Two great English parties united for one purpose only —to crush, put down, and bully a poor, weak, and starving nation; a nation they did not attempt to assist in her hour of famine and suffering. In this state of things the duty of the Irish members is plain. They are bound to use every form of the House to prevent the first stage of the Bill. We shall have no indecent haste. We must have full and fair discussion; and the Irish members are the best judges of the extent and value of the resistance which they ought to make to the measure of coercion.'

'We are bound to prevent the first stage of the Bill.' This was a frank avowal of policy; obstruction, not argument, was the weapon on which the Irish leader relied. Indeed, he never tried to make a secret of his contempt for argument in the House of Commons. 'Don't embarrass the Government,' was the cry of the complacent Irish Whig. 'Embarrass the Government' was the mandate of Parnell.

During the six nights' debate on the first reading I spent some hours with him walking up and down the corridors of the House. He was always anxious to learn anything of Irish history which had any practical bearing on the issues of the day. He now wished to know something of the previous fights over coercion. I told him the story of the struggle over Grey's Coercion Bill. 'By Jove,' he would say, 'that's good—and O'Connell too! They are always holding O'Connell up to me as a model, but you make him out to be as bad as I am. Can I get all this in books? You see I

am very ignorant. I am very quick, though, at picking up things.' I named some books to him. 'All right,' he said, 'I will go into the Library and get them. We will look through them together.' He went to the Library, and soon returned with the books. We stood at the little desk close to the door leading into the Reading-room. He plunged into the books, marking with blue pencil the passages that specially interested him. 'Do they allow you to mark books here?' I asked, observing that he was disfiguring the pages in the most reckless fashion. 'I don't know,' was the answer, with the air of a man who thought the question quite irrelevant. 'By Jove!' he would repeat, 'this is very good,' and he would once more daub the margin. 'Well, they cannot say I invented obstruction, for here is O'Connell doing the very thing, and defying everybody.'

A Whig Home Ruler came along, and was about to pass into the Reading-room, when Parnell suddenly stopped him.

'Where are you going?' he asked. 'Just into the Reading-room, Mr. Parnell, to skim over the evening papers.'

Parnell. 'Don't you think you ought to be in the House?'

Whig Home Ruler. 'Yes, Mr. Parnell, I will return immediately.'

Parnell [laying his hand on the Whig's shoulder]. 'You will speak against the Bill?'

Whig Home Ruler. 'I would rather not, Mr. Parnell. I really am not able to speak.'

Parnell [with a faintly humorous glance at me]. 'You can move the adjournment of the debate, or move the Speaker out of the chair. That won't take much.'

Whig Home Ruler [with alarm]. 'Oh, dear, no, Mr. Parnell, you must excuse me; I never could do it.'

Parnell [tightening his grip on the Whig's shoulder]. 'Mark, you must *vote* against this Bill. I suppose you can do that. It does not need a speech, and the sooner you get back to the House the better.'

Someone else called Parnell's attention off at this moment, and as the Whig, passing into the Reading-room, turned to me and said, 'Desperate man, desperate man,' Parnell returned to the desk.

After a time another Irish member (a moderate Nationalist) came along. Parnell stopped him too. 'Why have you come away?' he asked.

'I have just spoken, Mr. Parnell,' said the member, 'to the motion for adjournment, and I cannot do anything until the division is taken. I cannot speak twice to the same motion.'

Parnell. 'No, but you can help to keep a House and watch what is going forward. I think you should all remain in your places.'

After a little while I saw both the Nationalist and the Whig wending their melancholy way back towards the Lobby.

Another member soon appeared.

Parnell [stopping him]. 'Why are you all coming out of the House? You should remain at your posts. It is impossible to say what may turn up at any moment.'

Member. 'I have just spoken.'

Parnell. 'That does not matter; a speech is not everything.'

Member. 'Here is a telegram which I have just received from the corporation of ——, protesting against coercion.'

Parnell. 'Then go back and read it.'

Member. 'I cannot; I have already spoken.'

Parnell. 'Then you can give it to someone else to read. Give it to me. Come along.' And both walked off.

Another night while we were together an Irish newspaper reporter came to him and asked: 'Will you speak to-night, Mr. Parnell?'

Parnell. 'I really don't know.' Then, turning to an Irish member who had just joined us, 'I have lost the notes of my speech.'

Irish member. 'Where do you think you left them, Mr. Parnell?'

Parnell. 'I don't know.' Then, with a roguish twinkle: 'The notes of your speech are tied up with them.'

The Irish member, without asking any more questions, dashed off to the Library, and was soon back again and tearing off in other directions in search of the notes.

'I am sorry for poor F——,' said Parnell, as he looked in an amusing way after him; 'but it really does not matter whether the notes are lost or not.' On another occasion, when the debate had lasted for several nights, and when the House was thoroughly exasperated, an Irish Liberal who had made one of the ablest speeches against the Bill came up to Parnell and said:

'Will you allow the division to be taken to-night, Mr. Parnell?'

Parnell. 'I think not.'

Irish Liberal. 'To be quite frank, I have a personal interest in asking the question. I came up from Liverpool to vote to-night. I am obliged to be in

Liverpool again to-morrow, and I don't want to have my journey for nothing.'

Parnell. 'I don't think there will be a division to-night.'

Irish Liberal. 'When will there be a division?'

Parnell. 'I don't know. It won't be to-night.'

The Liberal pressed Parnell to allow the division to be taken, urging that there would be plenty of opportunities on the second reading and in committee to attack the Bill.

Parnell's simple answer was: 'No, I don't think there will be a division to-night.'

He did not argue the question. He gave no reasons for his decision. He merely repeated: 'There will be no division to-night.'

'Inexorable,' whispered the Liberal to me as he went off. 'That's the character of the man, and it gives him his power.'

Mr. Bright made a vigorous speech in support of the Bill. Mr. O'Connor Power, who was put up to answer him, failed utterly. I said so to Parnell. 'Your man failed to answer Bright. Bright ought to be answered. But he should not be treated as an enemy. His past services to Ireland ought not to be forgotten. He is as much our friend now as ever, though he is wrong on this question.'

Parnell. 'I agree with what you say about Bright. He ought to be treated in a friendly way. I got one of our best men to reply to him. I can do no more.'

'Do you think Bright has been answered?'

Parnell. 'Perhaps not. But if O'Connor Power failed, who is likely to succeed?'

'Bright's speech is very damaging, and it is ridiculous of your people to try and make light of a

speech which none of them have answered up to the present.'

We walked along the corridor in silence for a few seconds; then Parnell turned round, faced me, and said: 'What does it matter? Do you think that Irish speeches have any effect on that House? You know they mean to pass this Bill. Do you think' (with a sneer) 'that any number of clever and pretty speeches will prevent them? What does it matter who is right about the number of outrages? The question really is, Do the Irish people support the League or the English Government? We all know they support the League, because the League helps them, and they never trust the English Government. If we had not the people behind us we could do nothing. Mr. Forster talks as if *he* represented Ireland, and the House believes him. They believe what they like to believe. We must show them that Ireland supports us, and defies their House. They will get this Bill through, but it will be a big job I can assure you. They have not read it a first time yet. I don't know when they will, unless they break their own rules.'

A few nights afterwards we were walking in one of the corridors. The excitement in the House at this time was intense, and almost every English member was against the Irish party. Parnell was, as usual, calm and self-possessed, and he seemed to enjoy the discomfiture of the enemy. After awhile Lord Granville came along the corridor. Parnell took no notice of him. I said: 'A pleasant face, Lord Granville's.'

Parnell. 'I did not see it.'

Then Lord Kimberley came along. Parnell looked furtively at him as he passed, but said nothing. Soon Lord Spencer came along, following his colleagues.

Parnell turned round and looked after him, saying: 'A Cabinet Council. I wonder what they are up to now. They are at their wits' end to get this Bill read a first time. I wonder what will they do. Something violent I suspect. I wish I knew.' It was amusing to watch him as he said this, rather aloud to himself than to me; standing in the middle of the passage with folded arms, handsome, thoughtful face, figure erect and defiant, a very picture of dignity and authority. Looking at him one would have supposed that he was the Prime Minister, bent on upholding law and order, and that the innocent noblemen at whom he looked so suspiciously were Land Leaguers conspiring against the State. We walked once more towards the Library, when three more Cabinet Ministers approached us. 'I am right,' whispered Parnell as they passed; 'it is a Cabinet Council. I'm off' (with a smile). 'I must get my people together,' and he disappeared through a side door.

I wrote out an extract for him to use in his speech on the Coercion Bill. Mr. A. M. Sullivan, who sat by him as he read it to the House, afterwards described the scene to me. 'He made an impressive speech, and was listened to as usual with much attention. Then he pulled a piece of foolscap out of his pocket and began to read its contents. He got through the first two or three sentences fairly well, but stopped at the fourth. Ultimately he made it out; only, however, to find himself hopelessly stuck in the fifth and following sentences. The House watched him as he turned the paper in every direction to decipher the illegible words. I felt quite embarrassed on his account, though he was cool and unconcerned. I leant forward looking at the writing over his shoulder. "Mr. Parnell," I said, "I

am accustomed to that handwriting. Will you let me read the extract for you?" "No," said he, "I will read it myself," and he stuck to it doggedly until he read the whole document through. It was the worst quarter of an hour he had ever had in the House of Commons.'

I met Parnell the next night. I said: 'I am afraid I caused you some embarrassment last evening.' 'How?' he replied. 'A. M. Sullivan tells me you could scarcely make out my handwriting.'

Parnell. 'Not at all. I read it very well and produced a very good effect.'

This was characteristic of him—always ready to make the best of everything.

Forster's Coercion Bill was introduced on January 24. On the 25th Mr. Gladstone moved that it should have precedence of all other business. Parnell and the Irish members fiercely opposed this motion, adopting the most extreme obstructive tactics, and keeping the House sitting continuously from 4 P.M. on Tuesday until 2 P.M. on Wednesday. On Thursday, 27th, the debate was resumed. On Monday, 31st, the Government declared their determination to close the debate on the first reading that night. Parnell and the Irish protested, and prepared for another all-night sitting. Relays were ordered on both sides, and English and Irish settled down doggedly to work. The House was once more kept sitting continuously from 4 P.M. on Monday until 9 A.M. on Wednesday—forty-one hours. Then a memorable scene occurred.

On Wednesday morning, February 2, the Speaker —who had been relieved from time to time in the discharge of his duties during an uninterrupted sitting of forty-one hours—resumed the chair, and, review-

ing the incidents of the debate, declared that in the interest of 'the dignity, the credit, and the authority of the House,' he had resolved to stop the further discussion of the Bill, and to call upon hon. members to decide at once on the question of the first reading. This announcement fell like a thunderclap on the Irish party. They were thoroughly unprepared for it; they had no conception that the debate would be closed in this manner. Accordingly, taken completely by surprise, they did not attempt to resist the Speaker's authority, and the first reading was then put, and carried by a majority of 164 to 19. Immediately afterwards the House adjourned until noon, the Irish members, astonished and perplexed, crying out as they retired: 'Privilege! Privilege!'

Mr. Parnell was not present at this scene. He had been at his post until an advanced hour in the morning, and had retired for a brief rest. 'Parnell,' says Mr. Justin McCarthy, 'was not present. He came into the House some time afterwards. The men were complaining of his absence. But there were no complaints when he appeared. Everyone seemed delighted to see him. There was a feeling of relief. He took the whole business very coolly, and said the action of the Speaker should at once be brought under the notice of the House.

The House met at twelve o'clock. The report of the Speaker's *coup* had spread rapidly throughout the West End, and many persons had gathered within the precincts of the House to watch the further development of events. The Lobby was crowded, as usual on great or critical occasions, and the question, 'What will Parnell do now?' passed hurriedly around. There was a general impression that any attempt on the part

of the Irish members to resist the ruling of the Speaker, or to reopen in any shape the discussion which had been so summarily closed that morning, would be attended with grave consequences, the nature of which, however, no one ventured to define. 'They will be sent to the Tower,' said one bystander. 'Nonsense,' said another. 'Then what will happen?' said the first. 'God knows,' was the reply, 'but the House is not in a temper to stand any nonsense now.'

About twelve o'clock the Speaker passed through the Lobby to take the chair, looking as if nothing out of the ordinary routine of business had occurred. He was soon followed by the Irish party, who marched from the Library through the Lobby in single file with Parnell at their head, looking somewhat perplexed, but combative and defiant. After some preliminary matters had been disposed of, Mr. Labouchere rose, and in a full House, breathless, I think I may say, with expectation, and perhaps anxiety, said in his clear, bell-like voice: 'I wish to ask you, sir, whether, in bringing the debate upon the question which was before the House this morning to a sudden close, you acted under any standing order of the House, and if so, which.' Mr. Labouchere's rising was received with complete silence, and when he resumed his place only a very feeble cheer broke from the Irish ranks. It was plain the Irish members had not yet recovered from the effects of the Speaker's blow, and they were far too anxious and too uncertain as to the issue of the combat to cheer much or heartily. When Mr. Labouchere sat down the Speaker rose, and, folding his gown around him with dignity, said: 'I acted on my own responsibility, and from a sense of duty to the House.' Then a loud and prolonged cheer broke from

the Whig and Tory benches—the cheer of men who had been victorious, and were resolved that the fruits of their triumph should not be lost. When the cheering ceased Parnell rose, and his rising was a signal for a cheer, but yet a feeble one, from his followers. He said: 'I venture, sir, to assume it will be proper for me, in consequence of the reply which you have just vouchsafed to the question of the hon. member for Northampton, at once to bring forward, as a matter of privilege, a resolution declaring that the action of the Speaker in preventing further discussion on the Protection of Property and Person (Ireland) Bill this morning was a breach of the privileges of the House.' Parnell resumed his seat, and the Speaker at once rose, and in measured language answered: 'The hon. member having stated the resolution he proposes to submit to the House, I have to inform the hon. member that the resolution he so proposes relates, not to a question of privilege, but to a question of order.' These words were received with another burst of cheering from the Whig and Tory benches; and the Speaker continued: 'If he thinks proper to bring the matter under the notice of the House in the regular way, he is entitled to do so by notice of motion, but not at the present time and as a question of privilege.' Once more the words of the Speaker were received with Whig and Tory cheers, amidst which he resumed his seat. Mr. Parnell rose again, and again slight Irish cheers greeted him, his followers being desirous of showing their loyalty to him, but feeling that in the present crisis of affairs they really were not in a position to cheer. They had been defeated in the morning, and there did not yet appear the slightest chance of the tide of battle being turned against their adversaries. In these

circumstances they doubtless thought that it did not behove them to demonstrate too much. Their leader, addressing the Speaker, said: 'Sir, I respectfully submit for your further consideration that there is at least one precedent for the course I propose to take.' The Speaker firmly replied: 'I have ruled that the course the hon. member proposes to take is out of order.' Again the Whigs and Tories cheered lustily, and the Speaker added: 'If he wishes to challenge that ruling he is entitled to do so by motion.' Parnell rose again; but the House had now grown impatient, and cries of 'Order, order' broke from the benches on both sides above the gangway, in the midst of which he sat down. Here The O'Donoghue interposed to ask when his 'hon. friend would have an opportunity of raising the question of order'—an interrogatory which was received with laughter. The Speaker answered, 'That is a matter for the House itself,' a reply which evoked another salvo of cheers from the Whigs and Tories. And now the struggle seemed all over. There were slight 'movements' in the House, as if hon. members were preparing to settle down to business. The Speaker leant back in the chair and waved his hand gently in the direction of the Treasury Bench, to indicate to the leader of the House—Mr. Gladstone—that the coast was at length clear for passing to the 'Orders of the day.' At this juncture Mr. A. M. Sullivan sprang to his feet. 'Do I understand you, sir,' he said, with outstretched hand and in a clear and manly voice, 'do I understand you, sir, to rule that my hon. friend cannot as a matter of privilege challenge the course which, without precedent, you took this morning?' He paused for a moment, manifestly much agitated, but quite self-possessed, and then boldly continued: 'In

that case, sir, I rise to move that the House do disagree with Mr. Speaker in that ruling.' Now, for the first time, hearty cheers broke from the Irish ranks, mingled with cries of 'Chair,' 'Order, order,' from other parts of the House. Mr. Speaker quickly rose and said: 'In taking that course the hon. member will be disregarding the authority of the Chair, and I must caution the hon. member that the course he proposes to take will involve him in the consequences of that proceeding'—a reply which again called forth shouts of applause from the Ministerial and Tory benches. Mr. Sullivan, nothing daunted or disturbed by the minatory words of the Speaker, replied that there was no member of the House more ready to bow to the ruling of the Chair than he, as there were none who more 'totally disregarded consequences in the discharge of conscientious duties.' He was only seeking for advice and direction, and wished to be instructed and guided by the Speaker in the course he proposed to take. 'I ask you, sir,' he said, 'whether it is not a fact that in the Journals and records of this House there stand motions that the House do disagree with a particular ruling of Mr. Speaker on a point of order?' Again there were Irish cheers, which had scarcely subsided when the Speaker rose and said: 'I can quite understand that there may have been motions of that kind made in the House, and it may be that the hon. member can make such a motion, but not as a matter of privilege.'

'I did not rise,' answered Mr. Sullivan, 'to make it as a matter of privilege, but to ask your advice as to the course proper to take.'

The Speaker replied: 'If the hon. member admits that it is not a question of privilege his course is quite clear; he is bound to give notice of motion.' Once

again the decision of the Speaker was the signal for Whig and Tory expressions of triumph and exultation. But these manifestations of feeling did not disconcert the sturdy Celt, who was now full of fight and quite indifferent to consequences.

'I thank you, Mr. Speaker,' he said, 'but I wish further to ask you if it is not a fact that the ruling of the Chair has been challenged on the instant?'

The great crisis in the contest had now clearly arrived. The answer of the Speaker to this question would manifestly decide the issue, and it was accordingly awaited with much anxiety. 'The hon. member,' said the Speaker, 'asks me a question which at the present moment I am not able to answer without searching for precedents.' No Whig or Tory cheer greeted these words, but a ringing shout of triumph broke from the Irish benches, which was repeated again and again as Mr. Sullivan rose and, waving his hand in the direction of his countrymen, essayed to speak, but in vain, for the plaudits of the Home Rulers rendered all sounds save their own cheers inaudible. At length, the cheers gradually subsiding and complete silence having for a moment supervened, Mr. Sullivan, raising his voice to its highest pitch and speaking with great deliberation and firmness, said: 'Then, sir, in order that you may have time to search for precedents I shall conclude with a motion.' This declaration was received with another outburst of Irish applause, which was not in the least checked—but perhaps rather stimulated—by the rising of the Speaker. When order was restored, the Speaker, looking grave and serious, said: 'I caution the hon. member that if he proposes to move the adjournment of the House with a view of calling in question what was done this morning

he will be entirely out of order.' This statement was received with ironical laughter by the Irish members, and met by Mr. Sullivan with a pointed and, I think, dignified reply. He said: 'Sir, I am about to move the adjournment of the House, and I trust I shall do so within the strict rules and privileges of the House, and not beyond them.' He then proceeded to deliver a clever speech on the question of adjournment which lasted nearly an hour. He was followed by Mr. Gray, who seconded the motion. In quick succession the rest of the Irish members, supported by Mr. Cowen and Mr. Labouchere, took part in the debate, which dragged on until a quarter to six in the evening, when the House adjourned. Thus the Irish members on Wednesday afternoon gained a victory over the House which was as complete as that gained by the House over them in the morning. Throughout the whole of Wednesday they obstructed the public business, and rendered the work of the Speaker in stopping the debate in the morning inoperative.[1]

The fierce obstruction of the first reading of the Coercion Bill convinced the Government that a drastic change in the Rules of Procedure was necessary to defeat the tactics of Parnell, and they resolved to make this change before the next stage of the measure. Mr. Gladstone accordingly, on February 2, gave notice of a resolution to the effect that if a motion declaring the business urgent should be supported by forty members rising in their places, then the motion should be put forthwith without debate, and if carried by a majority of not less than three to one, the regulation of the business for the time being should remain in the hands of the Speaker.

[1] I have taken the description of this scene (which I witnessed) from *Fifty Years of Concessions to Ireland.*

This resolution was the first order of the day on Thursday, February 3. But before it was reached Sir William Harcourt informed the House that Michael Davitt had just been arrested in Dublin for violating the conditions of his ticket-of-leave.

'What conditions?' asked Parnell; but Sir William Harcourt gave no answer.[1]

Mr. Gladstone then rose to move the 'closure' resolution, but Mr. Dillon interposed to ask further questions relating to Davitt's arrest. The Speaker called on Mr. Gladstone.

Mr. Dillon refused to give way. 'I demand,' he cried out, amid the din which his persistence produced, 'I demand my privilege of speech.'

The Speaker then 'named' Mr. Dillon for wilfully disregarding the authority of the Chair, and on the motion of Mr. Gladstone he was suspended. Called upon to withdraw, he refused to leave his place, and was removed by the Sergeant-at-Arms. Mr. A. M. Sullivan questioned the authority of the Chair in ordering the forcible removal of Mr. Dillon without first seeking the sanction of the House for that course, but the point was quickly overruled.

Mr. Gladstone rose once more to propose his resolution, when Parnell moved that 'the right hon. member be no longer heard.' Another scene of indescribable excitement and confusion followed. The Speaker refused to hear Parnell; Parnell 'insisted' that his motion should be put. The Speaker named him for persisting in a course of 'wilful and deliberate obstruction,' and he was at once suspended on the motion

[1] The Government recognised that Davitt was a danger, and simply made the violation of the conditions of the 'ticket-of-leave' a pretext for arresting him. Davitt was immediately taken to Portland, where he remained until May 6, 1882.

of Mr. Gladstone. Thirty-two Irish members refused to leave the House during the division, and they were immediately suspended. 'I was sitting quietly in my room off the Strand,' says Mr. Frank Hugh O'Donnell, 'when Biggar rushed in and said: "We have been suspended. Do you run down to the House and get suspended at once." Of course I rushed off. As I took my seat Mr. Gladstone was speaking on the "closure." I at once moved that he should be no longer heard, and was suspended on the spot.' Other Irish members who had been away, at the 'grand scene' strolled in, moved that Mr. Gladstone should no longer be heard, and were suspended in detail. The last victim was 'Dick' Power, one of the most genial and pleasant of men. He was a great friend of the Sergeant-at-Arms, Sergeant Gossett, and indeed spent many hours chatting away in that official's room during dull nights when the House bored him. 'Dick' having refused to leave his seat during the division on Mr. O'Donnell's suspension, was named. He declined to withdraw unless under the pressure of superior force. The Sergeant-at-Arms appeared, placed his hand on Dick's shoulder, and asked his old friend to retire. 'I won't go, Sergeant,' said Dick. 'My dear Dick,' quoth the Sergeant, 'do come away.' 'Devil a foot, Sergeant. You'll have to get the police before I stir.' And he kept the Sergeant on tenterhooks for several minutes before finally quitting his place. Later on he might have been seen discussing the whole question in the Sergeant's room over a friendly cigar.

'Did Mr. Parnell,' I asked Mr. McCarthy, 'seek the expulsion of the Irish members on this occasion?'

He answered: 'Parnell certainly forced the running. Dillon first got into difficulties with the Speaker. He

said to Parnell: "Don't commit the party on my account. Let it be my affair alone." Parnell answered, "Go on, go on," and very soon made the matter a party affair. He did it deliberately. He always believed that the one thing necessary was to cause explosions in the House, and to show how hopelessly strained were the relations between English and Irish.'

The active Irish members having been got rid of, Mr. Gladstone then moved his resolution, which was carried with one alteration—viz., that there should be at least a House of 300 as well as a majority of three to one before 'urgency' could be voted.

The resolution having been adopted, 'urgency' was at once declared, and next day, February 4, Mr. Forster moved the second reading of the Coercion Bill.

Despite the revolution in procedure, the Irish still fought vigorously against the measure, and it was not until February 25 that the last stage was passed in the Commons. On March 2 the Bill became law. Briefly, it enabled the Lord Lieutenant to arrest any person whom he reasonably suspected of treasonable practices or agrarian offences, and to keep such persons in prison for any period up to September 30, 1882.

The Irish Executive were now possessed of the powers for which they had asked, and during the spring, summer, and autumn of 1881 hundreds of Land Leaguers were swept into Kilmainham. But the agitation did not abate. Men were readily found to jump into the breach; the places of the suspects were quickly filled; land meetings went on much as usual; the speeches of agitators increased in violence and lawlessness; crime and outrage were rampant—in a

word, the policy of the Government was everywhere met with denunciation and defiance, the Land League remaining supreme. The difficulties of the situation, in nowise diminished by the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, were fully realised at Dublin Castle, as the following minute of Lord Cowper will show:

Lord Cowper to the Cabinet

'The first point which I will consider is whether it is desirable to break up the Land League. I mean whether it should be declared an illegal association, and the head committee in Sackville Street and the various local committees forcibly suppressed. There is no doubt that in the opinion of many lawyers it is an illegal association, and if our law officers had shared this opinion it might have been a grave question in the early autumn whether it should not have been put an end to. This could hardly be done now without an Act of Parliament, and how long such an Act would take to pass, and how far the business of the session would be interfered with, her Majesty's Ministers are better able to judge than I am. It must be remembered that the Land League has now taken very deep root throughout the country, and that Fenians, Ribbonmen, and bad characters of every description take advantage of its organisation, and are enrolled in its local branches. If the restraining influences of the central body were withdrawn, and the local branches driven to become secret societies, crime, particularly assassination, might increase; for though the central body gives unity and strength to the movement, it does to a certain extent restrain crime.

'The priests still exercise an extraordinary influence

over the people, as has been shown lately in the most marked manner by the power they possess of controlling and pacifying the most excited crowd, and to withdraw the priests from the movement would be an object for which a great deal of risk might be run. I have thought it worth while to make these observations, but from recent speeches in both Houses I infer that her Majesty's Government have come to the conclusion that the Land League is not to be broken up.

'Next comes the question of stopping the Land League meetings. I have already expressed my opinion, in a minute of December 27, 1880, that they ought to have been stopped. They did an immense amount of mischief, and allowing them to go on has been and will be fixed upon as the chief error of our Administration. On the other hand, no one can suppose that under any circumstances there would not have been a vast number of outrages last year; and if we had suppressed the meetings we should have been accused of sitting on the safety valve, and it would have been said that if we had allowed a freer expression of opinion and a constitutional agitation all would have been well.

'I think now that stopping the Land League meetings would be too late, that it would involve too great a change of front, and that it would be much more difficult than last year, as the people are better organised and able to change the time and place of meeting more rapidly than they could before. We must pursue the policy we began at the end of the year, drawing a line at those meetings where there is sworn information that they would be attended with danger to an individual.

'Now comes the question of the arrest of indi-

viduals. To strike at the leaders is undoubtedly the right thing, and this is just what we have been accused of not doing. But openly teaching the doctrine of breach of contract, which is their real crime, does not, unfortunately, enable us to take them up. We are hampered in our action by an express agreement that we will not arrest any man unless we can say on our honour that we believe him to have actually committed or incited to outrage. This at first prevented us from attacking the leaders as vigorously as we might have done, but latterly some of them have been less cautious, and we have also prevailed upon ourselves to give a wider interpretation to our powers. For my part, I should be inclined to interpret them very widely. It is hardly too much to say that in the present state of the country everybody who takes a leading part in the Land League does, by the very fact of so doing, incite to outrage. And there is now hardly anybody whose detention policy would demand that I would not personally arrest. Next to arresting all the leading men that we can comes the strict enforcement of the law. Every failure to serve a process, or to carry out a forced sale, or an eviction, does immense mischief. Of course, a collision should, if possible, be prevented, and for this purpose we always endeavour to send an overwhelming force.

'I may here notice that complaint has been made of the troops being exposed to stoning without being allowed to act in return. A certain amount of this may be unavoidable, but troops, in my opinion, should never be brought face to face with the mob unless they are intended to act. It is not fair for the troops, and it diminishes the moral effect upon the people. The police should, if possible, be employed in prefer-

ence, as they can use their bâtons, which they are not afraid to use, and which inflict just the right sort of chastisement.

'These are the general principles which are impressed upon each Resident Magistrate, but as to details he must, of course, in each individual instance use his own discretion. I have little more to recommend. The state of the country is very bad, after making every allowance for the exaggeration of the Press. Indeed, these very exaggerations are a proof of the uneasiness of public feeling. One of the worst points is the bad feeling which prevails in the south and west against the military and police. Worse still are the vast mobs which can be collected at a moment's notice.

'In the autumn individual assassination was the great danger. Now, in addition to this is the danger of a sudden overwhelming, by sheer weight of numbers, of small bodies of police or military. One such catastrophe would be of incalculable evil. Besides the disgrace of the authorities, it would lead to after attempts of the same kind, and might actually be the beginning of a small civil war which could not be concluded without such an amount of bloodshed as would cause renewed bitterness of feeling against England for more than one generation. If the troops fire upon the people, as may be necessary at any moment, and loss of life, even indeed that of women and children, is the result, it must be remembered their action may have saved the country from something even more deplorable.'

If the Government had hoped to conciliate the agitators by the introduction of a big Land Bill they were doomed to disappointment. The bitterness caused by the fight over the Coercion Bill and the imprison-

ment of the Land Leaguers intensified the old feeling of distrust and ill-will, so that when Mr. Gladstone brought in his sweeping measure of land reform on April 7 he spoke to unsympathetic Irish benches. Biggar sat next to Parnell as the Prime Minister proceeded to unfold his scheme. When he had been on his feet for about ten minutes—and, of course, before he had touched the fringe of the subject—the member for Cavan turned to his colleagues and said, with characteristic abruptness: 'Thoroughly bad Bill.' A delightfully humorous smile was Parnell's only response. But Biggar's frame of mind was the frame of mind of many of the advanced Nationalists. They wanted a 'thoroughly bad' Bill because a 'thoroughly bad' Bill would not ease the situation.

There always have been certain Irishmen who believe that a policy of 'remedial legislation' would be fatal to the national demand. 'Let the grievances of the people be redressed,' they say, 'and there will be an end of Home Rule.' This was not Parnell's view. He believed that the spirit of nationality could not be quenched; that the claim for legislative independence would never be given up, whatever the course of remedial legislation might be. I once had a conversation with him in the Smoking-room of the House of Commons on the subject. It was *à propos* of a suggestion to appoint grand committees for the consideration of Irish, English, and Scotch Bills. Some of the Irish members thought that the appointment of these committees might be accepted as a substitute for Home Rule, and accordingly opposed the proposal. 'Irish nationality,' said Parnell, 'must be very thin if it is to be given up for grand committees or anything else. My opinion is that everything they give us makes for

Home Rule, and we should take everything. The better off the people are, the better Nationalists they will be. The starving man is not a good Nationalist.' Upon another occasion a rumour reached me that the Government (Lord Salisbury's Ministry, 1886) intended buying up the Irish railways. I mentioned the fact to an Irish member. 'Oh,' he exclaimed, 'we must not have that. It would settle Home Rule for ever. If the English Government sink money in the country that way, they will take care to keep everything in their own hands.' I told Parnell what his colleague had said. 'I am accustomed to these remarks,' was his commentary. 'All I say is, I hope what you tell me about the intentions of the Government is true. It would be a good business. It would open up the country, bring the people nearer good markets, and develop industry. Home Rule is not to be killed as easily as —— thinks. It would go on even if we lost ——.'

Parnell wanted a good Land Bill, and he was determined to secure the fullest measure of justice which it was possible to obtain for the tenants. 'The measure of Land Reform,' he had said at Ennis in 1880, 'will be the measure of your energy this winter.' The people were energetic with a vengeance, and the Land Bill was a sweeping measure of reform. 'I would strongly recommend public men,' Parnell said in the same Ennis speech, 'not to waste their breath too much in discussing how the land question is to be settled, but rather to encourage the people in making it ripe for settlement.' The people had made it 'ripe' for settlement. Mr. Gladstone's Bill proclaimed a revolution.

The old power of the landlord was for ever taken

away. He could no longer increase rents at his pleasure, or, indeed, increase them at all. New tribunals[1] were established for fixing rents, and generally for adjusting the relations of landlord and tenant. Increased facilities for the creation of a peasant proprietary were given, and the tenant's right to dispose of the goodwill of his farm was amply secured. The 'three F's'—fixity of tenure, fair rents, and free sale—for which Isaac Butt had agitated in vain (within the law, and without seeking to outrage Parliament or to humiliate English parties), were now wrenched from the Government by one of the most lawless movements which had ever convulsed any country.

'There is no use,' an Irish Unionist member once said in the House of Commons, 'in any Irishman approaching an English Minister on Irish questions unless he comes with the head of a landlord in one hand or the tail of a cow in the other.' It was in this way the Land League came, and we all now know the Land League triumphed. 'I must make one admission,' said Mr. Gladstone in 1893, 'and that is, that without the Land League the Act of 1881 would not now be on the Statute-book.'[2]

The Irish members were fairly astonished at the completeness of Mr. Gladstone's Bill, and some of them were little disposed to accept it.

Parnell's position was one of extreme difficulty. To have wrecked the Land Bill would have been an act of insensate folly; to have accepted it cordially might have made the Government feel that they had conceded too much, and would certainly have caused divisions in his own ranks. What was he to do?

[1] Land courts.
[2] House of Commons, April 21, 1893.

'When in doubt, do nothing,' was one of Lord Melbourne's wise maxims. Parnell resolved to do nothing for the present. Before the first and second reading of the Bill the Easter recess intervened. During that time he kept his own counsel. The general impression was, however, that he meant to support the Bill. 'People whispered: 'Parnell will take the moderate line, he will accept the Bill.' A clique of Parliamentarians prepared to undermine his authority. A convention was summoned in Dublin to consider the situation. Like Parnell, the convention decided to do nothing. Every member of Parliament was to be left free to take any course he pleased, thus leaving the question still open. The second reading of the Bill was fixed for the 25th of April.

A few days previously the parliamentary party met to consider finally what course should be pursued. 'We were all assembled on the appointed day,' says an Irish member. 'As usual, Parnell was not up to time, which gave an opportunity to the malcontents to grumble. At length he arrived, walked straight to the chair, of course, made no apology for being late, sat down, then rose immediately and said: "Gentlemen, I don't know what your view on this question is. I am against voting for the second reading of the Bill. We have not considered it carefully. We must not make ourselves responsible for it. Of course I do not want to force my views upon anybody, but I feel so strongly on the subject that if a majority of the party differ from me I shall resign at once." This was a thunderbolt. It took us all by surprise. The clique who were plotting against Parnell looked perfect fools. He had trumped their card. There was dead silence. "I now move," said Parnell, "that we

do not vote for the second reading." There were some expressions of dissent, but the motion was carried. The whole thing was done in less than an hour. Parnell, neither then nor at any other time, discussed the question with us.'

Mr. A. M. Sullivan was one of those who had spoken publicly during the recess in favour of the Bill. Parnell's decision that the party should abstain from voting on the second reading came as a surprise to him, as well as to everyone else. He was not at the party meeting, but news of what had occurred soon reached him. Coming into the chambers which we both occupied in the Temple and flinging himself into a chair, he said, with some warmth, 'Do you know what has happened?' I said 'No.' He went on: 'Parnell has carried a resolution pledging the party not to vote for the second reading of the Land Bill. He forced the party into this position by threatening to resign. This is a high-handed act. He did not give us the slightest inkling of what was passing in his mind. Some of us have made speeches in support of the Bill. I have myself stated publicly that I would vote for the second reading. Then Parnell comes without giving us a moment's preparation, and says that we must not vote for the second reading, or, if we do, he will resign. The only course open to me is to leave the party. I will write to Parnell, telling him exactly what I think, and placing my resignation in his hands.'

Mr. Sullivan did as he said. Afterwards he had an interview with Parnell, of which he gave me the following account: 'Parnell is certainly the coolest hand I ever met. He is never put out at anything, and he never thinks that you ought to be put out. He is a regular

Englishman. There is not a bit of the Celt in him. "Vote for the second reading if you think you have committed yourself. It will make no matter. As a question of tactics we ought not to make ourselves responsible for the Bill. Do whatever you think best. The Bill is safe." That is simply his answer to me. Parnell may be quite right in holding back. I entirely appreciate his anxiety not to make himself responsible for the Bill. What I object to is, that he should keep us in the dark up to the very last moment, and then force us into a position inconsistent with our public declarations.' Some days later Mr. Sullivan said: 'I never come away from talking to Parnell without feeling that he knows better than any of us how to deal with the people on this side. Time always tells in his favour. Many of us are inclined to be carried away by what we think a kindly or a generous act. Parnell is never carried away by anything. He never dreams of giving the English credit for good intentions. He is always on the lookout for the cloven foot. He distrusts the whole lot of them, and is always on the watch. They have got their match in him, and serve them right. It is not poor Isaac Butt that they have to deal with, or even O'Connell. Parnell is their master as well as ours.'[1]

The Land Bill was read a second time on May 19 by 352 to 176 votes, 35 Home Rulers walking out with Parnell and 24 joining the majority. In committee, however, Parnell's true designs revealed themselves. The Bill was to be saved, but the Government were not to be ostentatiously supported. Whenever the measure was in danger the Parnellites came to the rescue. When it was safe they criticised and objected, and, it must be allowed, improved the Bill. Mr.

[1] Mr. Sullivan did not vote for the second reading.

Heneage, a Liberal, moved an amendment to exclude English-managed estates from the operation of the Act. The Parnellites stood by the Government and saved the clause. Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice moved an amendment to limit the jurisdiction of the Land Court in fixing fair rents to tenancies under 100*l.* annual value. The Parnellites again stood by the Government and again saved that clause too.[1]

On July 30 the Bill was read a third time by 220 to 14 votes. Mr. Parnell again walked out of the House, followed by a handful of friends, while the great bulk of the Irish party supported the Government. Two nights afterwards—August 1—Parnell was suspended for defying the authority of the Chair. On a motion for regulating the business of the House during the remainder of the session he insisted on demanding a day for the discussion of the Irish administration. The Speaker called him to order again and again, but he held on the even tenor of his way. The Speaker warned, Parnell defied the warning. 'The Ministry of the day,' he said, 'of course always gain the sympathies of the powers that be, in this House, and if we may not bring the cause of our imprisoned countrymen before the House, I may say that all liberty and regard of private right is lost in this assembly, and that the Minister of the day has

[1] Another shifting of the political kaleidoscope occurred on the proposal of Mr. Parnell that the landlord should not be allowed to force the sale of the tenant's rights except with the consent of the court. The Government, desirous of giving the tenant a fair start with the new Bill, accepted the proposal, but on the protest of Mr. Gibson that the landlord should not possess less rights than other creditors, Mr. Parnell modified his proposal so as to place all on the same footing. These tactics somewhat disconcerted the Conservative leaders, who found themselves on a division supported by only seventy-six members, whilst Mr. Parnell was followed into the lobby by twenty members, including the whole Treasury Bench.—*Annual Register*, 1881.

transformed himself from a constitutional Minister into a tyrant!' Here the Speaker named Parnell at once.

Mr. Gladstone. 'I was about to move——'

Parnell. 'I shall not await the farce of a division. I shall leave you and your House, and I shall call the public to witness that you have refused freedom of discussion.'

He was then suspended for the remainder of the sitting.

The Land Bill now passed without further incident through the Commons, was of course 'amended' in the Lords, and ultimately received the Royal assent on August 22.

An Ulster Liberal has made the following statement to me with reference to the Land Bill:

'At the beginning of the year there was an article in the "Daily News" from which I gathered (rightly or wrongly) that it was the intention of the Government to introduce a strong Coercion Bill and a weak Land Bill. I wrote to the paper saying substantially that if this were the policy of the Government they could not rely on Ulster.

'I met Sir William Harcourt in the Lobby, and he asked me what I meant by writing such a letter. I said that Ulster would have no tinkering with the land question; that there should be a sweeping measure of reform. Sir William Harcourt asked me to breakfast with him next day, in order that we should talk the matter over. I then told him plainly that unless the Government meant to accept the "three F's" they had better not legislate at all. He expressed no opinion on the subject, but listened quietly to all I had to say. Some time afterwards, when the Bill was introduced, I met him in the Lobby again. He said:

"D——, when you told me that morning we breakfasted together that nothing less than the 'three F's' would do, I thought you were mad; but they are all in the Bill."

'When the second reading was carried, a number of Ulstermen met at the Westminster Palace Hotel to consider what message should be sent to the north. They had no copy of the Bill, and they asked me to get one. I went to the Irish office and saw Law (the Irish Attorney-General). I told him about the meeting at the Westminster Palace Hotel, and asked for a copy of the Bill. He said: "The only copy I have is the one you see on the table, which has my private notes on it, and of course I cannot give you that." I pressed him to give it to me, and he finally consented, making me promise that I would not let it out of my hands. As he gave me the Bill he said: "Do you see that?" pointing to a figure—I think it was 22—on the Bill. I said: "Yes; what does it mean?" "It means," he replied, "that that is the twenty-second Bill which has been before us!" "And, Law," I asked, "what was the first Bill like?" "Well may you ask," he said with a smile. And then I learnt this moral lesson from my conversation with Law: that the first Land Bill was an insignificant amendment of the Land Act, 1870, but that as lawlessness and outrage increased in Ireland the Bill was broadened until it reached its final dimensions.'

While the measure was going through Parliament Parnell lent himself to a new project. There was no organ in the Irish Press which he could absolutely control. The 'Freeman's Journal' was in the hands of Mr. Gray; the 'Nation' and 'Weekly News' belonged to the Sullivans; the 'Irishman,' the 'Shamrock,' and

the 'Flag of Ireland' were owned by Mr. Pigott. Parnell resolved to buy out Pigott and start a journal which he could himself command.

To carry out this purpose he formed the 'Irish National Newspaper and Publishing Company, Limited,' purchased all Pigott's papers, dropped the 'Shamrock,' converted the 'Flag of Ireland' into 'United Ireland,' and continued the 'Irishman.'

Mr. William O'Brien was appointed editor of the Land League organs, as 'United Ireland' and the 'Irishman' now became.

While negotiations were pending Parnell wrote to Dr. Kenny on July 9, 1881 :

Parnell to Dr. Kenny

'My dear Dr. Kenny,—Mr. O'Brien arrived here yesterday morning. I have had to-day an interview with him, and he has definitely agreed to accept the position at a salary of 400*l.* per annum. He wishes to be permitted to appoint a sub-editor, who will also act as commercial manager, at a salary of 300*l.* to 350*l.*; and he mentions Hooper, who is at present manager and factotum in general of the "Cork Herald." He thinks that Mr. James O'Connor might have his present salary in a third position on the paper; but he is not quite certain about this—so that it may become desirable to give Mr. O'Connor a hundred pounds or so and let him go. Mr. O'Brien will not be able to undertake the duties for two or three weeks; so that meanwhile the paper will have to be brought out by Mr. O'Connor. Mr. O'Brien thinks it would tend greatly to insure the success of the paper if it were known that the proprietors were the leading members of the Land League; and I have, on reconsideration of the question, come to

the conclusion that it would be better that our Limited Liability Company should be formed of such members. I would suggest the following names: Yourself, Mr. Egan, Mr. Dillon, Mr. Justin McCarthy, Mr. John Barry, Mr. Biggar, and myself. These names will be fairly representative of the different shades of feeling in the organisation. Mr. Davitt's name should of course be one, but there might be danger of interference from the Government under present circumstances. Kindly say by wire what you think of these names for the Limited Liability Company. Mr. O'Brien is very hopeful of the success of the paper, if determinedly taken in hand by the organisation of the Land League. He thinks that a total capital of 10,000*l.*, including the purchase money, will be sufficient. I have also communicated the above names to Mr. Egan.—I am, yours very truly,

'Charles S. Parnell.'

Some difficulties arose in carrying out these schemes, but Parnell brushed them all aside. On July 22 he wrote again to Dr. Kenny:

Parnell to Dr. Kenny

'I have had a good deal of business these last few days, so that I trust you will excuse my tardiness in replying to your letter. I think you were quite right to make the arrangement you have with O'Connor, which I suppose you did after consultation with O'Brien.

'I regret very much that Dillon will not co-operate in reference to the "Irishman"; but feel sure, when I am able to see him and explain matters fully, he will come round. I do not apprehend any grave results from the position taken up by our friends in Kilmainham in regard to the matter.'

All difficulties were finally got over, and on August 13 the first number of 'United Ireland' appeared.

With the passing of the Land Bill Parnell's difficulties increased. His American allies, as represented by Ford and the 'Irish World,' did not in the first instance wish the Bill to become law; they did not wish to see it in force. Parnell was resolved not to quarrel with his American allies, whose contributions filled the coffers of the League. On the other hand, he determined that the Land Act should not be made a dead letter. Indeed, he knew that the tenants would not permit it. What course, then, was he to pursue so that the farmers might reap the full benefit of the Land Act and his American friends be appeased? He determined to adopt his old tactics of drawing the fire of the English enemy on himself, believing that while English statesmen and publicists blazed at him from every quarter his influence in Ireland and in America would be unimpaired. Next, he determined that the tenants should be prevented from rushing precipitately into the Land Courts, and from abandoning all agitation henceforth. He had little faith in the Land Court *per se*. He believed that the reduction of rents would be in exact proportion to the pressure which the League could bring to bear upon the commissioners. 'By what rule,' I once asked an Irish official 'do the Land Courts fix the rents?' 'By the rule of funk' was the answer. Parnell resolved that the 'rule of funk' should be rigidly enforced. By the 'rule of funk' he had got the Land Act. By the 'rule of funk' he was determined it should be administered.[1] 'I thought at

[1] *United Ireland*, September 17, 1881, expressed this idea in unmistakable language: 'The spirit which cowed the tyrants in their rent offices must be the spirit in which the Land Commission Courts are to be approached.'

the time,' said the Ulster Liberal whom I have already quoted,[1] 'that Parnell's policy of trying to keep the tenants out of the Land Courts in 1881 was foolish, and almost criminal. But I now believe he was quite right.' By keeping the tenants back, by looking suspiciously at the Act, by keeping up the agitation, he succeeded in getting larger reductions than would ever have been made if the farmers had rushed into the courts, and if Parnell had taken no pains to control the decisions of the commissioners. In fact it was Parnell who got the Land Act, and it was Parnell who administered it in the south; though he refused to make himself responsible for it, and even appeared to be hostile to it. He played a deep game and played it with great ability. He kept his whole party together by not cordially accepting the Land Act, and he took pains at the same time to secure the best administration of it in the interests of the tenants.

Mr. Gladstone thought that Parnell was bent on obstructing the Land Act and thwarting the Government. Nevertheless the Prime Minister believed that the Irish Executive ought to pursue a conciliatory policy. On September 5 he wrote to Mr. Forster:

Mr. Gladstone to Mr. Forster

'. . . We have before us in administration a problem not less delicate and arduous than the problem of legislation with which we have lately had to deal in Parliament. Of the leaders, the officials, the skeleton of the Land League, I have no hope whatever. The better the prospect of the Land Act with their adherents outside the circle of wirepullers, and with the

[1] *Ante*, p. 298.

Irish people, the more bitter will be their hatred, and the more sure they will be to go as far as fear of the people will allow them in keeping up the agitation which they cannot afford to part with on account of their ulterior ends. All we can do is to thin more and more the masses of their followers, to fine them down by good laws and good government; and it is in this view that the question of judicious releases from prison, should improving statistics encourage it, may become one of early importance.'

In September an election took place in the County Tyrone. Mr. T. A. Dickson, the Liberal candidate, gained a great victory over Parnell's nominee, the Rev. Harold Rylett, a Unitarian Minister. The result filled Mr. Gladstone with hope.

On September 8 he wrote to Mr. Forster, who had gone abroad for a short holiday:

Mr. Gladstone to Mr. Forster

'The unexpected victory in Tyrone is an event of importance, and I own it much increases my desire to meet this remarkable Irish manifestation and discomfiture both of Parnell and the Tories with some initial act of clemency, in view especially of the coming election for Monaghan. I do not know whether the release of the priest (Father Sheehy) would be a seasonable beginning, but I shall be very sorry if we cannot do something to meet the various friendly and hopeful indications of which the Ulster election is the most remarkable. To reduce the following of Parnell by drawing away from him all well-inclined men seems to me the key of Irish politics for the moment. Though I felt reluctant that anything should be done in your

absence, yet I think the impendency of Monaghan election is a fact of commanding importance in the case before us.'

To this letter Mr. Forster replied on September 11, saying that the Tyrone election was certainly a stroke of luck, but reminding Mr. Gladstone that Tyrone was in Ulster, and that 'Ulster is not Connaught or Munster.' Upon the whole he was not disposed to take Mr. Gladstone's advice until there was some more cogent proof of the waning influence of Parnell than the Tyrone election afforded.

On September 14 a great Land League Convention which lasted for three days met in Dublin to consider the situation. There were divided counsels. Some thought that the Land Act should be freely used, others that it should be wholly repudiated. But, under the direction of Parnell, the convention unanimously resolved on a middle course. The Act was to be 'tested'; certain cases were to be carefully selected for trial. But there were to be no indiscriminate applications to the courts. This resolution simply meant that the Act was to be administered under the control of Parnell. 'Nothing,' said Parnell, 'could be more disastrous to our movement and our organisation, and to your hopes of getting your rents reduced, than any indiscriminate rush of the tenantry into court, and it is with a view to prevent this that we desire to take the tenantry in hand and to guide them in this matter, because, depend upon it, if we don't guide them there will be others that will. If we don't take hold of the Irish tenantry and guide them for their advantage, there will be others who will guide them for their destruction.'

Parnell's policy, however, did not satisfy his American allies, and he was forced to send the follow-

ing explanatory telegram to the President of the Land League of America:

'Dublin: Sept. 17, 1881.

'The convention has just closed after three days' session. Resolutions were adopted for national self-government, the unconditional liberation of the land for the people, tenants not to use the rent-fixing clauses of the Land Act, and follow old Land League lines, and rely on the old methods to reach justice. The Executive of the League is empowered to select test cases, in order that tenants in surrounding districts may realise, by the result of cases decided, the hollowness of the Act.'

On September 26 Parnell attended a Land League convention at Maryborough, when a number of resolutions were passed endorsing the action of the Dublin convention, and practically advising the tenants to use the Act under the direction of the League.

A private meeting of organisers was held some hours before the convention assembled to consider the resolutions which were to be submitted to it. 'I well remember,' says one who was present, 'sitting beside Parnell at this private meeting. Proofs of the resolutions were handed around. There were fifteen resolutions altogether. Parnell fixed his attention at once on No. 11, which ran as follows:

'"That the test cases selected for the Land Commission shall not be the most rack-rented tenants, but rather tenants whose rents hitherto have not been considered cruel or exorbitant."

'Parnell took out of his pocket a blue-ink pencil, and, having glanced down the proof, turned it over and wrote on the back:

'"*After the eleventh resolution.*

'"That, pending the result of the test cases selected by the Executive, no member of the League should apply to the court to fix his rent without previous consultation with, and obtaining the consent of, the branch of the League to which he belongs."

'Having written this, he handed me the proof to pass it on to the secretary so that the alteration might be duly made. I looked at it, and said: "This is an interesting document, Mr. Parnell, and I think I will give the secretary a clean copy and, as the lawyers say, 'file the original.'" He smiled, and simply said "It is business." The resolution as amended by Parnell was carried at the convention.'

I cannot say how far this Maryborough meeting affected the action of the Irish Executive, but curiously enough it was on this very day, September 26, that Mr. Forster wrote to Mr. Gladstone suggesting that Parnell should be arrested, adding: 'I think you will do great good by denouncing Parnell's action and policy at Leeds.'[1]

Mr. Gladstone did denounce Parnell's 'action and policy' at the Leeds meeting on October 7, telling his audience that the 'resources of civilisation were not exhausted,' and plainly hinting that they would be used against the Irish leader who [in his efforts to obstruct the operation of the Land Act] stood between the living and the dead, not, like Aaron, to stay the plague, but to spread the plague.'

'Parnell's reply to you,' Forster wrote to Gladstone on October 9, 'may be a treasonable outburst. If the

[1] Sir Wemyss Reid, *Life of the Right Hon. W. E. Forster.*

lawyers clearly advise me to that effect, I do not think I can postpone immediate arrest on suspicion of treasonable practices.'

Parnell's reply, made at Wexford on October 9, may or may not have been a 'treasonable outburst,' but there can be no doubt that it was the reply which the occasion demanded—spirited and defiant. He began:

'You have gained something by your exertions during the last twelve months; but I am here to-day to tell you that you have gained but a fraction of that to which you are entitled. And the Irishman who thinks that he can now throw away his arms, just as Grattan disbanded the volunteers in 1783, will find to his sorrow and destruction when too late that he has placed himself in the power of the perfidious and cruel and relentless English enemy.' Then, turning to Mr. Gladstone's speech, he continued:

'It is a good sign that the masquerading knight-errant, this pretending champion of the rights of every other nation except those of the Irish nation, should be obliged to throw off the mask to-day, and stand revealed as the man who, by his own utterances, is prepared to carry fire and sword into your homesteads, unless you humbly abase yourselves before him and before the landlords of the country. But I have forgotten. I said that he maligned everybody. Oh, no. He has a good word for one or two people. He says the late Isaac Butt was a most estimable man and a true patriot. When we in Ireland were following Isaac Butt into the lobbies, endeavouring to obtain the very Act which William Ewart Gladstone, having stolen the idea from Isaac Butt, passed last session, William Ewart Gladstone and his ex-Government officials were following Sir Stafford Northcote and Benjamin Disraeli into the

other lobby. No man is great in Ireland until he is dead and unable to do anything more for his country.

'In the opinion of an English statesman, no man is good in Ireland until he is dead and buried, and unable to strike a blow for Ireland. Perhaps the day may come when I may get a good word from English statesmen as being a moderate man, after I am dead and buried. When people talk of "public plunder" they should ask themselves who were the first plunderers in Ireland? The land of Ireland has been confiscated three times over by the men whose descendants Mr. Gladstone is supporting in the enjoyment of the fruits of their plunder by his bayonets and his buckshot. And when we are spoken to about plunder we are entitled to ask who were the first and biggest plunderers. This doctrine of public plunder is only a question of degree.

'In one last despairing wail Mr. Gladstone says, "And the Government is expected to preserve peace with no moral force behind it." The Government has no moral force behind them in Ireland; the whole Irish people are against them. They have to depend for their support upon a self-interested and a very small minority of the people of this country, and therefore they have no moral force behind them, and Mr. Gladstone in those few short words admits that English government has failed in Ireland.

'He admits the contention that Grattan and the volunteers of 1782 fought for; he admits the contention that the men of '98 died for; he admits the contention that O'Connell argued for; he admits the contention that the men of '98 staked their all for; he admits the contention that the men of '67, after a long period of depression and apparent death of national

life in Ireland, cheerfully faced the dungeons and horrors of penal servitude for; and he admits the contention that to-day you, in your overpowering multitudes, have established, and, please God, will bring to a successful issue—namely, that England's mission in Ireland has been a failure, and that Irishmen have established their right to govern Ireland by laws made by themselves on Irish soil. I say it is not in Mr. Gladstone's power to trample on the aspirations and rights of the Irish nation with no moral force behind him. . . . These are very brave words that he uses, but it strikes me that they have a ring about them like the whistle of a schoolboy on his way through a churchyard at night to keep up his courage. He would have you believe that he is not afraid of you because he has disarmed you, because he has attempted to disorganise you, because he knows that the Irish nation is to-day disarmed as far as physical weapons go. But he does not hold this kind of language with the Boers. At the beginning of this session he said something of this kind with regard to the Boers. He said that he was going to put them down, and as soon as he had discovered that they were able to shoot straighter than his own soldiers he allowed these few men to put him and his Government down. I trust as the result of this great movement we shall see that, just as Gladstone by the Act of 1881 has eaten all his own words, has departed from all his formerly declared principles, now we shall see that these brave words of the English Prime Minister will be scattered like chaff before the united and advancing determination of the Irish people to regain for themselves their lost land and their legislative independence.'

Parnell's speech was received with salvos of applause.

He struck the keynote of defiance which suited the temper of the audience. Mr. Gladstone spoke at Leeds as if he had a special mission to stand between Parnell and Ireland. Ireland answered at Wexford repudiating the help of any Englishman, and reminding the Prime Minister that whatever she had got from England she had got by the strength of her own right hand.

On the evening of the Wexford meeting two Irish members dined with Parnell. 'We felt,' one of them has since said to me, 'that he was bound to be arrested after this speech, and we thought that he ought to give us some instructions as to the future in case our suspicions should prove correct. P—— (the other member) suggested that I should ask him for instructions. I suggested that P—— should be the spokesman. In fact neither of us quite liked the job, not knowing exactly how he would take it. We all three sat down together. P—— and I were like a pair of schoolboys, anxious to get information but afraid to ask for it. It was a comical situation. P—— kept kicking me under the table to go on, and I kept h'ming and hawing, and beating about the bush, but Parnell, who was not at all inclined to talk, could not be drawn.

'At length I plucked up courage and said: "Do you think, Mr. Parnell, that you are likely to be arrested after your speech to-day?" "I think I am likely to be arrested at any time—so are we all. A speech is not necessary. Old Buckshot[1] thinks that by making Ireland a jail he will settle the Irish question." Then

[1] 'Buckshot' was a nickname given to Mr. Forster in reference to the kind of ammunition which the constabulary were ordered to use in case of being obliged to fire on the people. The name was scarcely appropriate to Mr. Forster, because the buckshot had been ordered by his predecessor. I once pointed this out to Parnell. He said: 'I believe so; but Forster uses the buckshot, so it comes to the same thing. It is a very good name for him.'

there was a pause. After a little while I returned to the charge. "Suppose they arrest you, Mr. Parnell," I asked, "have you any instructions to give us? Who will take your place?" "Ah!" he said deliberately, looking through a glass of champagne which he had just raised to his lips. "Ah, if I am arrested Captain Moonlight[1] will take my place."'

On Tuesday, October 11, Mr. Forster crossed to England, having previously arranged with Sir Thomas Steele, the Commander-in-Chief of the Forces in Ireland, that in the event of the Cabinet consenting to the arrest of Parnell he would wire the one word 'proceed.'

On Wednesday, October 12, the Cabinet met. Parnell's arrest was decided on. Forster immediately wired to Steele, 'Proceed.'[2]

Meanwhile Parnell, who had returned to Avondale on Tuesday, came back to Dublin on Wednesday night, intending to address a meeting next day in Naas, County Kildare. He was to have left the Knightsbridge terminus at 10.15 A.M. On Wednesday night he told the boots at Morrison's Hotel to call him at half-past eight in the morning. I shall let Mr. Parnell himself continue the narrative.

'When the man came to my bedroom to awaken me, he told me that two gentlemen were waiting below who wanted to see me. I told him to ask their names and business. Having gone out, he came back in a few moments and said that one was the superintendent of police and the other was a policeman. I told him to say I would dress in half-an-hour, and would see

[1] The threatening notices which used at this time to be served on landlords and obnoxious tenants were generally signed 'Captain Moonlight.'

[2] Sir Wemyss Reid, *Life of the Right Hon. W. E. Forster.*

them then. He went away, but came back again to tell me that he had been downstairs to see the gentlemen, and had told them I was not stopping at that hotel. He then said I should get out through the back of the house, and not allow them to touch me. I told him that I would not do that, even if it were possible, because the police authorities would be sure to have every way most closely watched. He again went down, and this time showed the detectives up to my bedroom.'

The rest of the story is told by the 'Freeman's Journal.'

'Mr. Mallon, the superintendent, when he entered the bedroom, found Mr. Parnell in the act of dressing, and immediately presented him with two warrants. He did not state their purport, but Mr. Parnell understood the situation without any intimation. The documents were presented to him with gentlemanly courtesy by Mr. Mallon, and the honourable gentleman who was about to be arrested received them with perfect calmness and deliberation. He had had private advices from England regarding the Cabinet Council, and was well aware that the Government meditated some *coup d'état*.

'Two copies of the warrants had also been sent to the Knightsbridge terminus, to be served on Parnell in case he should go to Naas by an early train. Superintendent Mallon expressed some anxiety lest a crowd should collect and interfere with the arrest, and requested Mr. Parnell to come away as quickly as possible. Mr. Parnell responded to his anxiety. A cab was called, and the two detectives, with the honourable prisoner, drove away. When the party reached the Bank of Ireland (to the former memories and future

prospects of which Mr. Parnell had, but a fortnight previously, directed the attention of many thousands), five or six metropolitan police, evidently by preconceived arrangement, jumped upon two outside cars and drove in front of the party. On reaching the quay at the foot of Parliament Street a number of horse police joined the procession at the rear. In this order the four vehicles drove to Kilmainham. This strange procession passed along the thoroughfares without creating any remarkable notice. A few people did stop to look at it on part of the route, and they pursued the vehicles, but their curiosity was probably aroused by the presence of the force rather than by any knowledge that after a short lull the Coercion Act was again being applied to the *élite* of the League. They stopped their chase after going a few paces, and at half-past nine o'clock Mr. Parnell appeared in front of the dark portals of Kilmainham.'

'We arrested Parnell,' Lord Cowper said to me, 'because we thought it absurd to put lesser men into jail and to have him at large. Furthermore, we thought that his test cases would interfere with the working of the Land Act.'

And how were things going on inside Kilmainham at that moment? One of the 'suspects' shall answer. 'I was in Kilmainham,' he says, 'several months before Parnell came. There was a little clique among the "suspects" who were always finding fault with Parnell, complaining of his moderation, and saying that he wanted to work the Land Act and to unite with the Liberal party. Upon one occasion a "suspect" was about to be discharged on account of ill-health. It was suggested that he should see Parnell and "stiffen his back," and make him face the Government. I

asked this "suspect," when we were alone, what he would say to Parnell. He answered: "I don't know I suppose he will talk me over in half-an-hour."

'When it became known that a convention would be held in September to discuss the Land Act these malcontents came together to consider what message they would send to the assembly. I remember they met in an iron shed in the recreation yard. One of them began the proceedings by taking a box of matches out of his pocket and saying, "Here is the message I will send to the convention—a box of matches to burn the Land Act." This kind of thing was always going on, and Parnell's "moderation" was a constant theme of conversation. One morning there was unusual bustle in the jail. A warder came to my room. I said: "Anything extraordinary going on. Is the Lord Lieutenant coming to see us?" He grinned and answered: "Mr. Parnell has come. He is in the cell below." My first feeling was to laugh outright. Here was the man whom the malcontents in Kilmainham condemned for his moderation, and now the Government had laid him by the heels like the rest of us. I sent a message to the Deputy Governor to ask for permission to see Parnell. He consented at once. I went downstairs and found Parnell in a cell 12 feet by 6, sitting in a chair. "Oh, Mr. Parnell!" I said, "have they sent you here too? What have you done?" "Forster thought," he answered, "that I meant to prevent the working of the Land Act, so he sent me here to keep me out of the way. I don't know that he will gain anything by this move."

'The room looked miserable, and I thought I might improve its appearance and brighten it a bit by putting a beautiful green baize cloth, which had been

specially worked for me by friends outside, on the bare table at which Parnell sat. I went up to my cell and brought down the cloth. "This, Mr. Parnell," I said, "will be better than nothing," and I put the cloth on the table, feeling very proud of myself. "Have you any good cigars?" asked Parnell. "Certainly," I answered. "I have a box of splendid cigars upstairs," and away I went for them. When I came back I found Parnell sitting once more by a bare table, and my beautiful green baize cloth was huddled up in a corner on the floor. I gave Parnell a cigar, and then, looking round the room, I said: "What have you done with my beautiful green cloth, Mr. Parnell?" "Ah!" he said, lighting a cigar, "green is an unlucky colour." Then, puffing it, "This is a very good cigar." '

While Parnell was spending his first days in Kilmainham Mr. Gladstone was holding high festival in London.

A few hours after the Irish leader's arrest the freedom of the City was presented to the Prime Minister. The news had spread that a decisive blow had been struck at the Irish conspiracy by the arrest of the chief criminal, and when Mr. Gladstone rose to address the meeting he was received with significant cheers. 'Within these few minutes,' he said in solemn accents and amid dead silence, 'I have been informed that towards the vindication of the law, of order, of the rights of property, and the freedom of the land, of the first elements of political life and civilisation, the first step has been taken in the arrest of the man ——.' Here he was interrupted. The great meeting rose *en masse*, frantic with excitement and joy, and rounds of applause rang again and again throughout the hall, until the speaker himself was astonished, and

perhaps startled, at the savage enthusiasm which this announcement called forth. When the cheering at length ceased he finished his sentence—'who has made himself prominent in the attempt to destroy the authority of the law, and substitute what would end in being nothing more nor less than anarchical oppression exercised upon the people of Ireland.'

'Parnell's arrest,' says the biographer of Mr. Forster, bearing strange testimony to the power of this extraordinary man, 'was hailed almost as though it had been the news of a signal victory gained by England over a hated and formidable enemy.' This description is as true as it is pithy. Indeed, the defeat of a foreign fleet at the mouth of the Thames could scarcely have excited a greater ferment than the simple announcement that Charles Stewart Parnell was safe and sound under lock and key in Kilmainham. The British Empire breathed once more.

How was the news of Parnell's arrest received in Ireland? A cry of indignation and anger went up from almost every part of the country. In many towns and villages the shops were closed, and the streets wore the appearance of sorrow and mourning. In Dublin there were riots, and the people were bludgeoned by the police. Everywhere there were manifestations of discontent and irritation. It may indeed be said without exaggeration that scarcely since the Union was the name of England more intensely detested than during the four-and-twenty hours following Parnell's arrest.

At the Guildhall, as at Leeds, Mr. Gladstone, in denouncing Parnell, assumed the *rôle* of the saviour of Ireland. But the memory of Cromwell was not more obnoxious to the Irish people than the personality of the Prime Minister at this moment. It was the old

story. Public opinion in England went in one direction, public opinion in Ireland in another. The solitary individual who regarded the whole proceeding with the most perfect equanimity was the prisoner himself. In the course of the day a reporter from the 'Freeman's Journal' called to interview him. He ended the interview, with one of those significant sentences which displayed his faculty for always saying the thing that best suited the occasion: 'I shall take it as evidence,' he said, 'that the people of the country did not do their duty if I am speedily released.'

In his cell at Kilmainham Parnell was a greater power in Ireland than the British Minister, surrounded by all the paraphernalia of office and authority.

CHAPTER XIII

KILMAINHAM

THE League's answer to Parnell's arrest was a manifesto calling upon the tenants to pay no agrarian rents, under any circumstances, until the Government had restored the constitutional rights of the people.

This document was inspired by Ford and Egan, written by William O'Brien, and signed by Parnell, Kettle, Davitt, Brennan, Dillon, Sexton, and Egan.[1] All the prominent Leaguers were not in favour of the policy of the No Rent manifesto. Mr. O'Kelly was opposed to it, and his views were shared by Mr. Dillon, who was sent back to Kilmainham (for a second time) a few days after Parnell's arrest. Indeed, the very day that Mr. Dillon arrived the document was under consideration. As he entered the room the conspirators were sitting in council. Parnell exclaimed: 'Here is Dillon; let us see what he says about the manifesto.' The manifesto was handed to Mr. Dillon, who condemned it on the instant. 'A strike against rent,' he said,

[1] On the introduction of the Coercion Bill Egan retired to Paris, and there attended to the financial business of the League. On October 17 Ford wired to him: 'Communicate with Parnell if possible, consult with your colleagues, then issue manifesto "No Rent."' Egan replied: 'Your suggestion is approved. Prompt measures are now in preparation to prepare a general strike against rent. The manifesto will be issued throughout the land. It is the only weapon in our hands.' Davitt's name was signed by Brennan, Davitt being in Portland.

'cannot be carried out without the help of the priests, and the priests cannot support so barefaced a repudiation of debt as this. Rome would not let them.' Parnell, who was really opposed to the manifesto, but reluctant at the moment to run counter to Ford and Egan, used Dillon's opposition as a pretext for re-opening the whole question. 'That,' he said, 'is serious. I think we had better carefully reconsider the whole question. We will read the paper over again.' This was done, Parnell still holding the scales evenly balanced, and throwing his weight neither upon the one side nor the other. At length a vote was taken. The majority of those present approved of the manifesto, which was accordingly issued and published in 'United Ireland' on October 17. It fell absolutely flat. It was condemned by the bishops and priests and ignored by the people. The arrest of Parnell had thrown the movement into the hands of the extremists. The No Rent manifesto was the result.

Parnell was fond of telling a story which tickled his peculiar sense of humour anent this manifesto and his own arrest. In the County Wexford there was a respectable farmer and a man of moderate political views named Dennis ——. He subscribed to the funds of the Land League, but took no further part in its work. He was, in fact, what in Ireland is contemptuously called an 'Old Whig.' Like many persons who sympathised little with the operations of the League, he had an intense admiration for Parnell. The arrest of the Irish leader was a shock to him. The one man of sense and moderation in the movement had been flung into jail, the one restraining hand had been paralysed—such was the wisdom of the

British Government. So reasoned Dennis ——, and so reasoning he resolved to make a protest on his own account.

A Land League meeting was convened in his own district. He determined to attend it. The day of meeting came. Dennis put in an appearance. The 'boys' were astonished and delighted to see him, and everyone said, 'Dennis must take the chair.' Dennis emphatically declined the most unexpected honour thus thrust upon him. But the chance of holding a Land League meeting under such respectable auspices was not to be thrown away. Despite all remonstrances, Dennis was borne to the chair amid popular acclamations. Strong resolutions were proposed, violent speeches were made, and a paper, which made the chairman's ears tingle, though he did not take it all in at once, was read. Then he was called upon to put the resolution to the meeting and to read the paper. He read the paper. It took his breath away, but he went through manfully to the end. The paper was the 'No Rent' manifesto, and the resolution pledged the meeting to support it. Three days afterwards Dennis found himself inside Kilmainham. The mildest-mannered man in Wexford was within the grip of the law. That was not all. Dennis was at first much shocked by the conversation of some of his fellow 'suspects.' He did not appreciate the good stories of the Leaguers. Gradually, however, he became reconciled to them. Finally, he began to retail them. At length the crisis arrived. One day he approached Parnell in the recreation yard. 'Mr. Parnell,' said he, 'I would like to have a word with you.' 'Certainly, Dennis,' said Parnell. They walked apart. 'Then'—as Parnell would say, telling the story—'Dennis came very close to me, put his lips very

close to my ear, and, holding up a copy of the "Freeman's Journal" at the same time, whispered: "Another blackguard swept." ' A landlord or a tenant had been shot for disobeying the popular decrees. Dennis had become completely demoralised under the coercion *régime*. The 'Old Whig' had been converted into a rampant Land Leaguer.

Apart from the inevitable monotony of a prison, life in Kilmainham was not severe. The place itself, for a jail, is not particularly repulsive.

Passing the portals, which are dark and gloomy, you enter a magnificent hall, through the glass roof of which, on the day in August 1897 when I visited it, the sun shone brightly. In this cheery-looking place there was scarcely a suggestion of a prison. A number of little rooms—cells about twelve feet by six—rising in three storeys, open off this central hall, and you ascend to the top by iron staircases. I went into one of the cells. A prisoner was working hard making sacks; he was bound to get through a certain number in the day, and he plied his needle with fierce industry. He was a forbidding-looking individual, and eyed the warder and myself rather savagely. Yet he had literary tastes, and a book by Rolf Boldrewood rested on a little shelf in his cell. The man was in for theft. I learned subsequently that it was in this cell that Parnell slept his first night in Kilmainham. He was, however, immediately transferred to good quarters in another part of the building. They consisted of two large rooms, one of which he used by day, the other by night. Nothing could be more comfortable within the walls of a prison. The day room was indeed excellent—large and plenty of light.

It has sometimes been said that Parnell chafed

more than any of the suspects under the prison treatment. I asked one of the warders if that were so. He said: 'Not at all. He was a delicate gentleman, but he bore up as well as any of them.' Parnell himself did not complain of his treatment in Kilmainham. One night, shortly after his release, when a scratch dinner had been prepared for him in the house of a Dublin friend, the hostess apologised, saying: 'This is worse than Kilmainham.' 'Ah well, come,' he said smiling, 'Kilmainham was not so bad after all.'

One of his favourite recreations in jail was chess. All the 'suspects' used to meet in the central hall, and there Parnell would be often seen playing chess with one of his comrades. 'I often played with him,' says one of these. 'He was not a scientific chess player, and he clearly had very little practice. I used always to beat him, and I am not a good player; but his play was characteristic. He was very slow in making moves. As soon as he had decided on some course, instead of moving the piece slowly, as people who think slowly generally do, he would pounce upon it and rap it energetically down on the spot he wanted, suddenly developing some fierce movement of attack. When he was stopped he would relapse into a state of thoughtfulness once more until he had worked out another plan of assault; then he would again move rapidly and energetically until he was brought to a standstill again.'

On April 10, 1882, Parnell was allowed to leave Kilmainham to visit his sister, Mrs. Thomson, whose son was dying in Paris. It was whispered at the time that this was merely an excuse to get out of prison; that Parnell's nephew was not dying; even some malignant spirits went so far as to say that he had no

nephew. The following letter will dispose of these slanders:

Parnell to Mrs. Dickinson

'8, Rue Presbourg, Paris: April 17, 1882.

'My dear Emily,—I shall be sure to call to see Theodosia and Claude before I return to Ireland, but cannot fix the day just yet. I will wire him the day before. Delia is much cut up by her dreadful loss, but is somewhat better now; my being here has done her a great deal of good. It appears Henry used to live in an apartment of his own, and it was quite by accident that they discovered he was ill. In the first ten days it did not seem to be much, but the fever then went to his head, and after a week's constant delirium the poor fellow died. He used to devote himself entirely to music, composing, &c., and it is thought that his brain was injured or weakened by dwelling too much upon this one subject, and so was unable to stand disease.

'Your affectionate brother,

'Charles S. Parnell.

'P.S.—I am sorry to hear Theodosia is not looking at all strong.'

A few days afterwards Parnell returned to Kilmainham.

Mr. Forster's Coercion Act had now been twelve months in force. It had proved an utter failure; and, to do Mr. Forster justice, no one was more painfully conscious of the fact than he. His confessions of failure are indeed pathetic. 'I can never do now what I might have done for Ireland,' he sorrowfully admits as early as June 1881, and he adds, 'it is seriously to be thought whether after the Land Bill is passed I ought not to get out of it all.'

In September he writes again: 'Up to now, Limerick, West Cork, Kerry, and the Loughrea district of Galway have been as bad as ever.'

In October Mr. Gladstone, in the innocence of his heart, was anxious that law-abiding citizens in Ireland should be sworn in as special constables. There is a touch of humour in Mr. Forster's reply, though it also affords a curious commentary on the complex state of affairs in Ireland. 'As regards special constables, one of the first questions I asked months ago was, why could we not have them? I was soon convinced that in Ireland they are impossible; in the south and west we cannot get them, and in the north Orangemen would offer themselves, and we should probably have to put a policeman at the side of every special to keep him in order.' In November he writes again: 'I am sorry to say there is a turn decidedly for the worse, and we are going to have a most anxious winter. . . . We have more secret outrages and attempts to murder'; and he concludes sorrowfully: 'If we could get the country quiet I should be anxious to leave Ireland. While we are fighting for law and order I cannot desert my post; but this battle over and the Land [Act] well at work, I am quite sure that the best course for Ireland, as well as for myself, would be my replacement by someone not tarred by the Coercion brush.' [1]

The early months of 1882 still found Ireland the prey of anarchy and disorder.[2] On April 12 Mr. Forster wrote to Mr. Gladstone: 'My six special magistrates all bring me very bad reports. These are confirmed by

[1] Sir Wemyss Reid, *Life of the Right Hon. W. E. Forster.*

[2] The Irish Government seems to have lost its head over the anarchical condition of the country; and Mr. Clifford-Lloyd, one of the special magistrates, issued an insane circular to the police stating that

constabulary reports. The impunity from punishment is spreading like a plague.'

On April 19 Lord Cowper wrote to the Cabinet:

Lord Cowper to the Cabinet

'The returns of agrarian crime during the last two years are before the Cabinet. They have been presented in every kind of shape, and comparisons may be made by weeks, by months, and by quarters. The increase of murders and other serious outrages is fluctuating, and not uniform, but this increase is very serious, and for this reason new legislation is demanded. With regard to this fluctuation, I may remark in passing that after any very great crime, towards which any considerable attention has been attracted, there appears generally to be a lull.

'For instance, since the murders of Mr. Herbert and Mrs. Smythe[1] there were very few outrages for nearly a fortnight. This seems to point towards proving that a strong organisation still exists, and that the Land League is not so completely broken down as was imagined. This is, I am afraid, very much owing to the fact that since the imprisonment or dispersion of the men who led it the work has been taken up by women. We know that women go about the country conveying messages and encouraging disaffection, and that they distribute money in large quantities both by hand and by letter.

if they should 'accidentally commit an error in shooting any person on suspicion of that person being about to commit a murder,' the production of the circular would exonerate them. This document—which, as the *Annual Register* says, was practically authority 'to shoot on sight'—had ultimately to be withdrawn.—*Annual Register*, 1882, p. 187.

[1] On April 2 a most sensational agrarian murder was committed. Mr. Smythe, while driving with his sister-in-law, Mrs. Henry Smythe, was fired at. The shot missed him, but hit and killed Mrs. Smythe.

'My own idea, looking solely to the state of things in this country, would have been to treat the women exactly like the men, both as to the ordinary law and as to arrest under the Protection of Person and Property Act; and to have made no more difference between the two sexes than a magistrate or judge would in the case of stealing a loaf of bread or a pair of boots. I am aware, however, that the feeling of the British public and of the House of Commons must be consulted, and if the arrest of women would raise such a storm as to render the renewal of the Act impossible this may be sufficient reason for not acting as I should wish. The returns of outrage of themselves appear to demand new measures. But they are not the only mode by which we should judge the necessity for these. If I am asked what other means of judging there are, I answer, "general opinion, as far as it can be collected, of those likely to know."

'The Irish Press of all shades of political feeling is of one mind as to the serious state of the country. I have seen many landlords, agents, and others. I have seen many of the judges, and their personal accounts more than confirm what they have said in public. Above all, I have seen resident magistrates, inspectors, and sub-inspectors, who come to the Castle almost every day from all parts of the country to recommend arrests; and the general, I may say universal, opinion is that the amount of intimidation is as serious as it can be, and that a sudden increase of agrarian crime at any moment, to any extent, is quite possible.

'But it is hardly necessary to go further than the printed reports of the six special resident magistrates, who have charge of the worst part of the country. It must be remembered that these six men are picked out

from more than seventy of their class, that each one of them is known to be of exceptional ability, and that their experience is drawn from separate districts. They all concur in their views of the deplorable state of the country and the utterly crushing intimidation which prevails, and we know what this intimidation may at any time produce. They agree also as to the necessity for further legislation, and their recommendations are substantially the same.

'In addition to the renewal of the Protection of Person and Property Act for another year, these recommendations are as follows :

'1. Increase of summary jurisdiction.

'This is the point to which I should personally attach the highest importance of all. A resident magistrate, and in serious cases a special resident magistrate, should be present.

'2. Special commission to try agrarian cases in certain districts without jury. Unless the judge can be compelled to act there will be difficulties about this. If so it will be all the more necessary that, under No. 1, twelve months' imprisonment with hard labour could be given as recommended by Messrs. Plunkett, Clifford-Lloyd, and Blake.

'3. Improvement of Arms Act, so as to make one warrant do for a whole townland and allow search by night; also power to search for papers.

'4. Power to tax districts for payment of extra police, and for compensation for death or injury to the person.

'5. Power to arrest strangers and persons at night.

'As I consider the present question to be whether any fresh legislation is required, and in what general direction, I do not enter into more minute particulars. I content myself with saying that in my opinion legis-

lation is required, that it is required at once, and that every day during which crime can be committed with impunity will make the dealing with it more difficult.'

This minute of Lord Cowper's bears witness to the failure of Mr. Forster's policy. The last state of Ireland was worse than the first. 'If you are arrested, who will take your place?' Parnell was asked after the Wexford meeting. 'Captain Moonlight will take my place' was the answer. Captain Moonlight had taken his place in earnest. The National Land League had been suppressed immediately on the publication of the 'No Rent' manifesto. Its place was at once taken by the Ladies' Land League, an organisation formed some twelve months previously on the suggestion of Mr. Davitt to meet the very contingency which had arisen.

The ladies very soon outleagued the League. Lord Cowper, as we have seen, said on one occasion that the central executive of the Land League did exercise some controlling influence over the wilder spirits in the country districts. But no controlling influence was exercised now. Things went from bad to worse.

The total number of agrarian outrages for the ten months—March to December 1880—preceding the Coercion Act was 2,379. The total number for the ten months—March to December 1881—succeeding the Coercion Act, 3,821. When one classifies these outrages the case appears even worse.

Ten months preceding Coercion Act

Homicides	Firing at the person	Firing into dwellings
7	21	62

Ten months succeeding Coercion Act

Homicides	Firing at the person	Firing into dwellings
20	63	122

In the first quarter of 1881 there was one murder; in the first quarter of 1882 there were six. The total number of cases of homicide and of firing at the person in the first quarter of 1881 was seven; in the first quarter of 1882, thirty-three.

The total number of agrarian outrages in October 1881, when the Land League was suppressed, stood at 511; in March 1882 the figure was 531. But it is unnecessary to dwell further on these details. The utter breakdown of the Coercion Act is beyond dispute.

'Everyone,' says Lord Cowper with perfect frankness, 'advised us to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act—the lords-lieutenant of counties, the police, the law officers. The police led us quite astray. They said they knew all the people who got up the outrages, and that if the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended they could arrest them. Of course we found out afterwards that the police were mistaken.'

Some two years after the events with which I am now dealing I called one morning on Mr. Bright at his apartments in Piccadilly. He was sitting at the table, wrapped in a dressing-gown and reading Plowden's 'History of Ireland.' 'Ah!' he exclaimed, 'they say I have lost all interest in Ireland since I voted for coercion, as they call it; still I have been reading this book all the morning. The history of Ireland has always interested me.' After some talk about Irish history the subject of coercion came up again. 'They call it coercion,' he said, 'but they forget the coercion of the Land League.'

'Their coercion, Mr. Bright,' I said, 'is at all events more effective than yours. Mr. Forster's Act was a complete failure. I felt very sorry that you voted for

the Bill. I heard your speech in support, and I didn't like it.'

Mr. Bright (with a smile, and stroking his chin with his finger). 'I dare say you didn't. What would you have? Remember, I voted for coercion before. The position I have always taken has been that you cannot resist the demand of the Minister who is responsible for the administration in Ireland, though you may say, as I have certainly said, that other remedies must be applied.'

I said: 'The Minister in this case was wrong.'

Mr. Bright. 'Well, yes' (getting up and throwing some coal on the fire and then turning his back to it, looking withal a noble figure, as he there stood with leonine head, venerable grey hair, and dignified bearing). 'The suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act,' he continued, 'had been successful in the case of the Fenians; we supposed it would be successful in the case of the Land League. That was the mistake. The League was a bigger organisation. It extended all over the country. The arrest of the leaders did not affect it: the local branches were too well organised. For every man who was arrested there was another ready to take his place. Our information was wrong. The conspiracy was more widespread and more deeply rooted than we were led to suppose. It was not a case for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act.'

I said: 'The policy was inexcusable.'

Mr. Bright. 'To be fair you must consider the circumstances under which the policy was adopted. Put yourself in the place of a Cabinet Minister. Suppose the Lord Lieutenant and Chief Secretary—the men, mark, who are responsible for the government of the country, the Executive—suppose they tell you that

they will resign unless you give them the powers they demand, what would you say?'

I made no reply.

Mr. Bright. 'You don't answer, but what you feel inclined to say is, "Let them resign."'

I said: 'Exactly.'

Mr. Bright. 'If you say that, it shows that you cannot put yourself in the place of a Cabinet Minister. Resignations are very serious things for a Government. They are not to be lightly accepted. There is another point. Suppose you could not get anyone to fill their places. I do not say it was so; it did not come to that. I put the case. No. I admit the policy was a failure, or, at least, not as successful as we anticipated it would be. But under the circumstances, in face of the representations of the Irish Government, it was impossible to avoid trying it. Remember, too, that if we had not passed a Coercion Act we could not have got a good Land Bill through. That was a consideration which weighed much with me, and I think with all of us.'

The failure of Mr. Forster's policy was patent to all. What was now to be done? The Irish Executive had no misgivings on the point. More coercion; that was *their* remedy. The Protection of Person and Property Act, which would expire in September, should be renewed, and a new Crimes Bill passed. These were the proposals of Lord Cowper and Mr. Forster. But Mr. Gladstone was little disposed to plunge deeper into a policy which had been tried and which had failed. All along it had been his wish rather to let the 'suspects' out than to keep them in, and the thought uppermost in his mind at this crisis was, 'Is there any chance of a *modus vivendi* with Parnell?'

Mr. Chamberlain also had been against coercion from the beginning; he had been Forster's enemy in the Cabinet during the whole period of the Chief Secretary's term of office, and he was now determined to thwart the efforts of the Irish Executive in committing the Government any longer to a policy which had been marked by failure. Mr. Chamberlain was energetically supported in the Press by Mr. John Morley, then editor of the 'Pall Mall Gazette.'

'We knew,' said Lord Cowper, 'that Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Morley were working together to thwart Mr. Forster,' and Lord Cowper was right. But this was not all. The Tories were suddenly seized by a virtuous fit, and cried out against coercion too. 'The present measures of coercion,' said Mr. Gorst on March 28, 'have entirely failed to restore order in Ireland. The assizes just concluded show that the amount of crime was more than double what it was in all the various districts last year; in almost every case the juries failed to convict, and therefore there must be some new departure on the part of the Government.'

A Conservative member, Sir John Hay, gave notice of motion:

'That the detention of large numbers of her Majesty's subjects in solitary confinement, without cause assigned and without trial, is repugnant to the spirit of the constitution, and that to enable them to be brought to trial jury trials should, for a limited time in Ireland, and in regard to crimes of a well-defined character, be replaced by some form of trial less liable to abuse.'

Mr. W. H. Smith proposed 'to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if the Government will take into their

consideration the urgent necessity for the introduction of a measure to extend the purchase clauses of the Land Act, and to make effectual provision for facilitating the transfer of the ownership of land to tenants who are occupiers on terms which would be just and reasonable to the existing landlords.'

Here were the Tories apparently condemning coercion and proposing an alternative policy.

A peasant proprietary had always been Parnell's solution of the Land question. A peasant proprietary was now the solution of Mr. W. H. Smith. Were the Tories going to outflank Mr. Gladstone? Was the old parliamentary hand going to be checkmated? There never existed a parliamentary tactician on whom it was more difficult to execute a flank manœuvre than Mr. Gladstone, and he had no notion now of allowing the Opposition to pose as the enemies of coercion and the friends of the Irish tenants at his expense. Indeed, the Tory manœuvres served only to strengthen the hands of the anti-coercionists in the Cabinet, and to stimulate the Prime Minister in his eagerness to end the Forster *régime*.

While Whigs and Tories were thus playing the usual party game, regarding Ireland merely as a pawn on the chess-board, Parnell sat in his spacious room in Kilmainham revolving the whole situation in his mind. 'And what a room!' said a friend who visited him at this time. 'The table strewn with everything, newspapers, books, magazines, light literature, Blue Books, illustrated periodicals, fruit, addresses from public bodies, presents of every description, all lying in one indiscriminate heap before him, and he supremely indifferent to their existence.'

'You have everything here, Mr. Parnell, except a

green flag,' said an admirer; and Parnell smiled at this delicate allusion to one of his many superstitions. 'How is the No Rent manifesto working, Mr. Parnell?' said another visitor. 'All I know about it is that my own tenants are acting strictly up to it,' was the grim answer.

Reports of the state of the country reached him almost every day. Indeed, he knew all that was going on as well as, perhaps even better than, Mr. Forster. Ireland was in a state of lawlessness and anarchy. Lawlessness and anarchy which served only to embarrass the British Minister mattered little to Parnell. Lawlessness and anarchy which served to embarrass himself mattered a great deal. The country was drifting out of his hands, and drifting into the hands of reckless and irresponsible men and women whose wild operations would, he felt sure, sap his authority and bring disaster on the national movement. It was quite time for him to grasp the reins of power once more, and to direct the course of events. His release from prison became, in fact, a matter of paramount importance. How was he to get out? I have said that the thought uppermost in Mr. Gladstone's mind was how to bring about a *modus vivendi* with Parnell. The thought uppermost in Parnell's mind was how to bring about a *modus vivendi* with Mr. Gladstone. It occurred to the Irish leader that a treaty might be made on the basis of doing something more for the Irish tenants. He had pointed out the defects of the Land Act, he had dwelt on the importance of dealing with the question of arrears, and he now thought that this question might be made the ground of some arrangement whereby the present intolerable and (it seemed to him) insane condition of affairs would be ended.

Parnell, as has been already mentioned,[1] had left Dublin for Paris on April 10. At Willesden Junction he was met by Mr. Justin McCarthy, Mr. Quin, and Mr. Frank Byrne. They had organised a public demonstration, which, however, Parnell avoided, saying that he did not consider himself free by the terms of his release to take part in any political proceedings. That same evening he had a long conversation with Mr. Justin McCarthy on Irish affairs. 'I told him,' says Parnell, 'that the tenants, all of them who could pay their rents, had done so and obtained good reductions, and that there only remained those who could not pay—the smaller tenants in arrears. That the "No Rent manifesto" had been practically withdrawn, as when the [new] Land Bill was drafted[2] it had been withdrawn from circulation, and no further attempts made to get the tenants to refuse to pay their rents; and that now the thing was to press Parliament for some legislation to assist the small tenants, some 100,000 in number I suppose, who were unable to pay their rents and who were threatened with evictions. I told him that if these tenants were evicted on any large scale the result would be great increase of crime and terrible suffering, and that I had every reason to believe that the state of the country, and the crime in the country, was entirely due to the inability of those small and poor tenants to pay their rents, and that in self-protection they were going about, or their sons were going about, banding themselves together to intimidate the larger tenants from paying, or that they had been doing so, and that an Arrears Act would have an immediate effect in

[1] *Ante*, p. 323.

[2] A Bill drafted by Parnell in prison for the amendment of the Land Act of 1881.

producing tranquillity and restoring peace in the country.' [1]

On April 11 he saw Captain O'Shea (an Irish Home Rule member of Whig proclivities, who was in touch with the Government), and repeated what he had said to Mr. McCarthy. That night Parnell crossed to Paris. Captain O'Shea immediately put himself in communication with Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Chamberlain, apparently suggesting the feasibility of some arrangement by which the 'suspects' might be released and an Arrears Bill passed. Subsequently he received the following letters:

Mr. Gladstone to Captain O'Shea

'April 15, 1882.

'Dear Sir,—I have received your letter of the 13th, and I will communicate with Mr. Forster on the important and varied matter which it contains. I will not now enter upon any portion of that matter, but will simply say that no apology can be required either for the length or freedom of your letter. On the contrary, both demand my acknowledgments. I am very sensible of the spirit in which you write; but I think you assume the existence of a spirit on my part with which you can sympathise. Whether there be any agreement as to the means, the end in view is of vast moment, and assuredly no resentment, personal prejudice, or false shame, or other impediment extraneous to the matter itself, will prevent the Government from treading in that path which may most safely lead to the pacification of Ireland.

'Truly yours,

'W. E. Gladstone.'

[1] Special Commission, Q. 58,758, *et seq.*

Mr. Chamberlain to Captain O'Shea

'April 17, 1882.

'My dear Sir,—I am really very much obliged to you for your letter, and especially for the copy of your very important and interesting communication to Mr. Gladstone. I am not in a position, as you will understand, to write you fully on the subject, but I think I may say that there appears to me nothing in your proposal which does not deserve consideration. I entirely agree in your view that it is the duty of the Government to lose no opportunity of acquainting themselves with representative opinion in Ireland, and for that purpose that we ought to welcome suggestions and criticism from every quarter, and from all sections and classes of Irishmen, provided that they are animated by a desire for good government and not by blind hatred of all government whatever. There is one thing must be borne in mind—that if the Government and the Liberal party generally are bound to show greater consideration than they have hitherto done for Irish opinion, on the other hand, the leaders of the Irish party must pay some attention to public opinion in England and in Scotland. Since the present Government have been in office they have not had the slightest assistance in this direction. On the contrary, some of the Irish members have acted as if their object were to embitter and prejudice the English nation. The result is that nothing would be easier than at the present moment to get up in every large town an anti-Irish agitation almost as formidable as the anti-Jewish agitation in Russia. I fail to see how Irishmen or Ireland can profit by such policy, and I

shall rejoice whenever the time comes that a more hopeful spirit is manifested on both sides.

'Truly yours,

'J. CHAMBERLAIN.'

Mr. Gladstone at once put Mr. Forster in possession of O'Shea's communications. The Irish Secretary seems to have been quite sympathetic on the question of arrears; but he did not see his way to the release of Parnell. He would not bargain with the Irish leader. He would not allow himself to be undermined by Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Morley. He looked upon the whole business as an underhand proceeding, quite in keeping with the attempts which had been constantly made to thwart him in his Irish administration, and he resolved to take no part in negotiations which had been begun over his head.

'Forster himself,' says Lord Cowper, 'thought ultimately that Parnell would have to be let out on certain conditions. It was the way the thing was done rather than the thing itself to which he objected.'

On April 18 Parnell wrote a characteristic letter, making an appointment with Mr. McCarthy, but saying nothing of the business in hand.

Parnell to Justin McCarthy

'8 Rue Presbourg, Paris: Tuesday, April 18.

'MY DEAR MCCARTHY,—I hope to pass through London next Sunday, and will try to look you up at your house in Jermyn Street. Have had a bad cold since I have been here, but am nearly all right again. With best regards to all friends,

'Yours very truly,

'CHARLES S. PARNELL.'

Parnell to Mr. Justin McCarthy

'Saturday [April 22, 1882].

'My dear McCarthy,—I have arrived in England, and will call to see you to-morrow afternoon some time. I cannot at present give you the exact hour, but would it be too much to ask you to remain at home after three o'clock? I trust you will have some news of result of Cabinet to-day.[1]

'Yours very truly,
'C. S. P.'

On Sunday afternoon Parnell discussed the whole situation with Mr. McCarthy. He had previously seen Captain O'Shea, who expressed the hope that, as a result of the negotiations then going on, the 'suspects' might be permanently released. 'Never mind the "suspects,"' he said; 'try and get the question of the arrears satisfactorily adjusted, and the contribution made not a loan, but a gift on compulsion. The Tories have now adopted my views as to peasant proprietary. The great object to be attained is to stay evictions by an Arrears Bill.'[2]

On April 24, as we have seen, Parnell was back at Kilmainham. On the following day he wrote to Mr. McCarthy:

[1] 'It was not,' says Sir Wemyss Reid in his *Life of Forster*, 'until the 22nd [of April] that the Cabinet took up the Irish question, Mr. Forster having by this time returned to London.'—Vol. ii. p. 428.

[2] There were 100,000 tenants in arrears, and consequently unable to avail themselves of the benefit of the Land Act. These tenants could all be evicted. Parnell's object was to get a Bill which would practically wipe out these arrears. See *Annual Register*, 1882, p. 21.

Parnell to Mr. Justin McCarthy

[Confidential]

'Kilmainham: April 25, 1882.

'My dear McCarthy,—I send you a letter embodying our conversation, and which, if you think it desirable, you might take the earliest opportunity of showing to Chamberlain. Do not let it out of your hands, but if he wishes you might give him a copy of the body of it.

'Yours very truly,

'Charles S. Parnell.'

The body of the letter ran as follows:

'We think, in the first place, no time should be lost in endeavouring to obtain satisfactory settlement of the arrears question, and that the solution proposed in the Bill standing for second reading to-morrow (Wednesday) would provide a satisfactory solution, though the Church Fund would have to be supplemented by a grant from Imperial resources of probably a million or so.

'Next, as regards the permanent amendment of the Land Act, we consider that the rent-fixing clauses should be extended to as great an extent as is possible, having in view the necessity of passing an Amendment Bill through the House of Lords; that leaseholders who have taken leases, either before or since the Act of 1870, should be permitted to apply to have a fair rent fixed; and that the purchase clauses should be amended as suggested by the Bill the second reading of which will be moved by Mr. Redmond to-morrow.

'If the Government were to announce their intention of proposing a satisfactory settlement of the arrears difficulty as indicated above, we on our part would

make it known that the No Rent manifesto was withdrawn, and we should advise the tenants to settle with their landlords. We should also then be in a much better position than we were ever before to make our exertions effective to put a stop to the outrages which are unhappily so prevalent.

'If the result of the arrears settlement and the further ameliorative measures suggested above were the material diminution of outrage before the end of the session, and the prospect of the return of the country, after a time, to something like a normal condition, we should hope that the Government would allow the Coercion Act to lapse, and govern the country by the same laws as in England.'

Mr. Chamberlain acknowledged the receipt of this communication in the following letter:

Mr. Chamberlain to Mr. Justin McCarthy

'April 30.

'My dear McCarthy,—Many thanks for your note, with the extract from Mr. Parnell's letter. I will endeavour to make good use of it. I only wish it could be published, for the knowledge that the question still under discussion will be treated in this conciliatory spirit would have a great effect on public opinion.

'You may rely on me at all times to do my best to help forward the solution of the Irish problem, and, in spite of past failure and past mistakes, I am still hopeful for the future.

'Yours very truly,

'J. Chamberlain.'

About the same time Parnell wrote to Captain O'Shea:

Parnell to Captain O'Shea

'Kilmainham: April 28.

'I was very sorry that you had left Albert Mansions before I reached London from Eltham, as I had wished to tell you that after our conversation I had made up my mind that it would be proper for me to put Mr. McCarthy in possession of the views which I had previously communicated to you. I desire to impress upon you the absolute necessity of a settlement of the arrears question which will leave no recurring sore connected with it behind, and which will enable us to show the smaller tenantry that they have been treated with justice and some generosity.

'The proposal you have described to me as suggested in some quarters of making a loan, over however many years the payment might be spread, should be absolutely rejected, for reasons which I have already fully explained to you. If the arrears question be settled upon the lines indicated by us, I have every confidence—a confidence shared by my colleagues—that the exertions which we should be able to make strenuously and unremittingly would be effective in stopping outrages and intimidation of all kinds.

'As regards permanent legislation of an ameliorative character, I may say that the views which you always shared with me as to the admission of leaseholders to the fair rent clauses of the Act are more confirmed than ever. So long as the flower of the Irish peasantry are kept outside the Act there cannot be any permanent settlement of the Land Act, which we all so much desire.

'I should also strongly hope that some compromise might be arrived at this session with regard to the amendment of the tenure clauses. It is unnecessary

for me to dwell upon the enormous advantages to be derived from the full extension of the purchase clauses, which now seem practically to have been adopted by all parties.

'The accomplishment of the programme I have sketched would, in my judgment, be regarded by the country as a practical settlement of the land question, and would, I feel sure, enable us to co-operate cordially for the future with the Liberal party in forwarding Liberal principles; so that the Government, at the end of the session, would, from the state of the country, feel themselves thoroughly justified in dispensing with further coercive measures.

'Yours very truly,

'C. S. PARNELL.'

On April 30 Captain O'Shea called on Mr. Forster at his residence in Eccleston Square, and showed him this letter. Mr. Forster has given us a detailed account of the interview:

'After carefully reading [the letter] I said [to Captain O'Shea]: "Is that all, do you think, that Parnell would be inclined to say?" He said: "What more do you want? Doubtless I could supplement it." I said: "It comes to this, that upon our doing certain things he will help us to prevent outrages," or words to that effect. He again said: "How can I supplement it?" referring, I imagine, to different measures. I did not feel justified in giving him my own opinion, which might be interpreted to be that of the Cabinet, so I said: "I had better show the letter to Mr. Gladstone, and to one or two others." He said: "Well, there may be faults of expression, but the thing is done. If these words will not do I must get

others; but what is obtained is"—and here he used most remarkable words—"that the conspiracy which has been used to get up boycotting and outrages will now be used to put them down, and that there will be a union with the Liberal party;" and as an illustration of how the first of these results was to be obtained, he said that Parnell hoped to make use of Sheridan and get him back from abroad, as he would be able to help him put down the conspiracy (or agitation, I am not sure which word was used), as he knew all its details in the west. (This last statement is quite true. Sheridan is a released suspect, against whom we have for some time had a fresh warrant, and who under disguises has hitherto eluded the police, coming backwards and forwards from Egan to the outragemongers in the west.) I did not feel myself sufficiently master of the situation to let him know what I thought of this confidence; but I again told him that I could not do more at present than tell others what he had told me. I may say that in the early part of the conversation he stated that he (O'Shea) hoped and advised—and in this case he was doubtless speaking for Parnell—that we should not to-morrow—I suppose meaning Tuesday—"pledge ourselves to any time for bringing on fresh repressive measures." He also said that he had persuaded Parnell to help to support a large emigration from the west, and that Parnell had told him that he had a good deal of conversation with Dillon, and had brought him round to be in full agreement with himself upon the general question.'

Mr. Forster immediately sent Parnell's letter and the above account of his own interview with Captain O'Shea to Mr. Gladstone. 'I expected little from these negotiations,' was the Irish Secretary's comment upon

the whole transaction. But Mr. Gladstone was highly gratified. 'This,' said he, 'is a *hors d'œuvre* which we had no right to expect, and I rather think have no right at present to accept. I may be far wide of the mark, but I can scarcely wonder at O'Shea saying "the thing is done." . . . On the whole Parnell's letter is, I think, the most extraordinary I ever read. I cannot help feeling indebted to O'Shea.' [1]

The thing *was* done. On May 1 the Cabinet met to discuss the prospective policy in lieu of coercion. After the meeting of the Cabinet Mr. Gladstone wrote to Lord Cowper:

Mr. Gladstone to Lord Cowper

'My dear Cowper,—In consequence of the altered position of the No Rent party, further attested to us by important information which (without any covenant) we have obtained, the Cabinet has discussed anxiously the question whether the three members of Parliament [2] now in prison should be released, with a view to further progressive release of those not believed to be implicated in crime upon careful examination of their cases. No decision has been absolutely taken, but the Cabinet meets again to-morrow at twelve, and it is probable that a telegram may be sent to you requesting you to give directions for the immediate liberation of the three. The information we have had in the briefest words is shortly this: we know that Parnell and his friends are ready to abandon "No Rent" formally, and to declare against outrage energetically, intimidation included, if and when the Government announce a satisfactory plan for dealing with arrears. We have

[1] Sir Wemyss Reid, *Life of the Right Hon. W. E. Forster.*
[2] The three were Parnell, Mr. O'Kelly, and Mr. Dillon.

already as good as resolved upon a plan, and we do not know any absolute reason why the form of it should not be satisfactory.

'Sincerely yours,

'W. E. GLADSTONE.'

On May 2 Mr. Gladstone telegraphed in cypher to Lord Cowper:

'Matters being settled here for immediate action and on a footing named in last telegram to sign and give necessary directions for the three forthwith.'

To this Lord Cowper wired in reply:

'I should much prefer, for reasons I will give by letter, that your intention should be carried out by my successor. But I will obey orders if insisted on.'

This letter, giving the reasons, ran as follows:

Lord Cowper to Mr. Gladstone

'Vice-Regal Lodge, Dublin:

'May 2, 1882.

'MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,—The proposed release of the three members of Parliament so took me by surprise that I have hardly been able to form a deliberate opinion about it. Nothing but a series of formidable objections has yet occurred to me. This is the way in which the circumstances present themselves to my mind. These men have been imprisoned for a gross violation of the law. They follow this up with a violation still grosser, the No Rent manifesto. There is at this moment a great amount of bad outrage. We know or suspect that this is instigated by the prisoners. At the same time their organs in the Press taunt us with having put under restraint the only people who have

power to stop it. We, apparently despairing of restoring order ourselves, let them out on condition that they will help us and will refrain for the future, not from the conduct for which they were imprisoned, but only from the more outrageous policy to which they have afterwards committed themselves, and even this they are only willing to do in return for fresh legislation in favour of the tenant.

'There may be another side to the question, but, as I am not able to grasp it, you will understand my objections to being the instrument of their release.

'Yours very truly,

'COWPER.'

Mr. Gladstone wired immediately:

'Your signature, if required, as it would be after resignation, would be merely ministerial and without political responsibility. When do you come to London? I quite understand your letter, as it shows me, to my surprise, that you have had no previous information.'

This terminated the correspondence.

Lord Cowper immediately signed the order of release, and Parnell (with his colleagues, Mr. O'Kelly and Mr. Dillon) walked forth a free man once more. All Ireland, outside the loyal corner of Ulster, hailed the liberation as a national triumph, and a shout of victory went up from one end of the land to the other. The Irish Executive had been beaten. The Prime Minister, who but seven months before had announced Parnell's arrest with such dramatic effect to an excited English meeting, had now flung the Irish agents of the Government over and made peace with the invincible agitator. Mr. Forster, rightly appreciating

the omnipotence of Parnell, described this situation thus:

'A surrender is bad, but a compromise or arrangement is worse. I think we may remember what a Tudor king said to a great Irishman in former times: "If all Ireland cannot govern the Earl of Kildare, then let the Earl of Kildare govern all Ireland." The king thought it was better that the Earl of Kildare should govern Ireland than that there should be an arrangement between the Earl of Kildare and his representatives. In like manner, if all England cannot govern the hon. member for Cork, then let us acknowledge that he is the greatest power in all Ireland to-day.'

On his release Parnell hastened to Avondale, whither he was accompanied by an Irish member, who shall describe the scene of his arrival at home:

'I went to Avondale with Parnell after his release from Kilmainham. When we arrived at the place all the old servants rushed out to see him. They were crying with joy. I was horribly affected, and began to cry myself. Parnell was absolutely unmoved. I thought he was the most callous fellow I had ever met. An old woman rushed out and seized him by the hand, kissed it, covered it with tears, and said: "Oh, Master Charley, are you back to us again?" He was like a statue. He made some casual remark as if he had been out for a morning walk, and passed through them all into the drawing-room, where Mrs. Dickinson was. I hung back, as I did not like to be present at the meeting between brother and sister, but Parnell said: "Come along." Mrs. Dickinson was as icy as himself. She got up calmly as he entered, and said quite casually: "Ah, Charley, is that you? I thought they would never let you back again."

'*Parnell.* "Well, what did you think they would do to me?"

'*Mrs. Dickinson.* "I thought they would hang you."

'*Parnell* (smiling). "Well, it may come to that yet."

'That was the whole greeting. They then talked about family affairs.'

It has been said that there was no Kilmainham treaty. Well, it is idle to quibble about words. There was a Kilmainham treaty, and these, in a single sentence, were its terms. The Government were to introduce a satisfactory Arrears Bill, and Parnell was to 'slow down' the agitation. 'One of the most sagacious arrangements,' says Mr. Healy, commenting on Parnell's conduct, 'that ever enabled a hard pressed general to secure terms for his forces.'

CHAPTER XIV

THE NEW RÉGIME

One of the first results of the Kilmainham treaty was the resignation of Lord Cowper and Mr. Forster. On May 4 Mr. Forster made his explanation in Parliament. The substance of what he said may be given in a few sentences. The state of Ireland did not justify the release of Parnell without a promise of 'amendment'[1] or a new Coercion Act. He darkly hinted at a bargain between the Prime Minister and the agitator, but did not dwell on the subject. While he was in the middle of his speech, and just as he had uttered the following words: 'There are two warrants which I signed in regard to the member for the city of Cork'—Parnel entered the House. It was a dramatic scene.

Deafening cheers broke from the Irish benches, drowning Forster's voice, and preventing the conclusion of the sentence from being heard.

Parnell quickly surveyed the situation, and, bowing to the Speaker, passed, with head erect and measured tread, to his place, the victor of the hour.

One can easily imagine his feelings when Mr. Gladstone rose to answer Mr. Forster. 'To divide and govern' had always been the policy of the English in Ireland.

[1] On the lines already indicated, *ante*, p. 328.

Parnell was now applying that policy to the English themselves. Seven months before Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Forster had been united in sending him to prison. They were united no longer.

The English in Ireland never more thoroughly appreciated the importance of dividing their enemies, while standing shoulder to shoulder themselves, than did this man, who was so English in temperament and in method. To see English parties at sixes and sevens while he commanded an unbroken phalanx was the central idea of his policy. He now saw the Prime Minister rise to fight his battle, which was, in truth, the battle of the Prime Minister too.

What a revolution! Mr. Gladstone and Parnell in the same boat and Mr. Forster flung to the waves. Mr. Gladstone's reply was simple and courteous. In brief it came to this. The circumstances which had warranted the arrest no longer existed; in addition, he had an assurance that if the Government dealt with the arrears question the three members released would range themselves on the side of law and order.

Parnell followed, saying:

'In the first portion of his (Mr. Gladstone's) speech the idea conveyed was that if the hon. members for Tipperary and Roscommon (Messrs. Dillon and O'Kelly), along with myself, were released we would take some special action with regard to the restoration of law and order. I assume that the right hon. gentleman has received information from some of my friends to whom I have made either written or verbal communication with regard to my intentions upon the state of this Irish question. But I wish to say emphatically that I have not in conversation with my friends or in any written communication to my friends entered into the

question of the release of my hon. friends and myself as any condition of our action. (Mr. Gladstone, "Hear, hear.") I have not, either in writing or verbally, referred to our release in any degree whatsoever, and I wish to call attention to the first statement of the Prime Minister in order to show that it conveyed—although I am sure the right hon. gentleman did not intend it should do so—the reverse of that fact. ("No, no," from Mr. Gladstone.) Still, sir, I have stated verbally to more than one of my hon. friends, and I have written, that I believe a settlement of this arrears question—which now compels the Government to turn out into the road tenants who are unable to pay their rents, who have no hope of being able to pay their rents, for which they were rendered liable in the bad seasons of 1878, 1879, and 1880—would have an enormous effect in the restoration of law and order in Ireland—(Cheers)—would take away the last excuse for the outrages which have been unhappily committed in such large numbers during the last six months, and I believed we, in common with all persons who desire to see the prosperity of Ireland, would be able to take such steps as would have material effect in diminishing those unhappy and lamentable outrages.' (Ministerial and Irish cheers.)

And so the discussion practically ended on May 4, to be resumed, however, some time later with more bitterness and rancour. In the interval a terrible tragedy occurred. On May 6 the new Lord Lieutenant (Earl Spencer) made his state entry into Dublin. The new Chief Secretary (Lord Frederick Cavendish) took part in the pageant. Afterwards he drove on an outside car to the Chief Secretary's Lodge in the Phœnix Park. On the way he met the Under-Secretary (Mr.

Burke), alighted, and both walked together through the park. As they came opposite the Viceregal Lodge about 7 P.M. a band of assassins fell upon them and stabbed them to death. These men belonged to a murder society, self-called the 'Invincibles,' which had sprung up under Mr. Forster's *régime*[1] for the purpose, as one of them said, of 'making history' by 'removing' obnoxious political personages. Mr. Burke and Lord Frederick Cavendish were their first victims. The assassins were ultimately arrested and hanged.[2] The 'Annual Register' of 1882, in giving an account of this horrible transaction, says: 'It is even more painful to know that from the Viceregal Lodge Lord Spencer himself was looking out of the windows, and saw with unconcerned eyes the scuffle on the road some hundred yards away, little thinking that what seemed to be the horseplay of half a dozen roughs was in reality the murder of two of his colleagues.'

This statement is inaccurate. Lord Spencer did not see the 'scuffle.'

Here is his Lordship's recollection of what happened: 'It is said that I saw the murder. That is not so. I had asked Cavendish[3] to drive to the park with me. He said he would not; he would rather walk with Burke. Of course, if he had come with me it would not have happened. I then rode to the park with a small escort, I think my aide-de-camp and a trooper. Curiously enough, I stopped to look at the polo match which Carey described, so that he and I seem to have

[1] Forster's own life was frequently in jeopardy, and he seems to have had some miraculous escapes.—Sir Wemyss Reid, *Life of the Right Hon. W. E. Forster*.

[2] One of the 'Invincibles,' Carey, turned informer. He was afterwards shot by a man named O'Donnell, on board ship off Cape Colony. O'Donnell was arrested, and brought to England and hanged.

[3] On hearing that Burke had already set out for the park Lord Frederick Cavendish took the car to overtake him.

been together upon that occasion. I then turned towards the Viceregal Lodge. The ordinary and more direct way for me to go was over the very scene of the murder. Had I so gone the murder would not probably have been committed. Three men coming up would have prevented anything of that kind. But I made a slight *détour*, and got to the lodge another way. When I reached the lodge I sat down near the window and began to read some papers. Suddenly I heard a shriek which I shall never forget. I seem to hear it now; it is always in my ears. This shriek was repeated again and again. I got up to look out. I saw a man rushing along. He jumped over the palings and dashed up to the lodge, shouting: "Mr. Burke and Lord Frederick Cavendish are killed." There was great confusion, and immediately I rushed out; but someone of the Household stopped me, saying that it might be a ruse to get me out, and advising me to wait and make inquiries. Of course the inquiries were made and the truth soon discovered. I always deplore my unfortunate decision to make that *détour*, always feeling that if I had gone to the lodge by the ordinary way the murder would have been prevented. I have said that I did not see the murder, but my servant did. He was upstairs and saw a scuffle going on, but of course did not know what it was about.'

The news of the crime sent a thrill through the land. Agrarian outrages were common enough. But political assassination was something new.[1] 'Had the Fenians anything to do with it?' a correspondent of an American paper asked Kickham. 'I don't know,' was

[1] The object of the assassins was to kill Burke. Lord Frederick Cavendish was killed simply through the accident of his being with Burke.

the answer; 'but if they had they were Fenians seduced by the Land League.' Candour compels me to say that it was the murder of Lord Frederick Cavendish which produced a real feeling of sorrow and of shame among the people. He was a stranger. He had never up to that hour taken part in the government of the country. He was an 'innocent' man. An old Fenian—a hater of the Land League and all its works—told me the following anecdote, which I think fairly illustrates Irish popular feeling: 'I went into a shop,' he said, 'in New York a few days after the murder to buy something. I said casually to the man behind the counter: "This is bad work." He agreed, and denounced the crime in strong language. Here, at all events, thought I, is a man who has escaped the influence of the Land League. I turned to leave, and as I got to the door he added: "What harm if it was only Burke? But to kill the strange gentleman who did nothing to us!" That was what he thought about it, and no doubt that was what a great many other Irish people thought about it too.'

What thought Parnell? There cannot be a question that he was profoundly moved by the event. It was not easy to startle him, to take him by surprise. But the Phœnix Park murders did both. An outburst of agrarianism would probably have produced no effect upon him. The reports which he had received in prison rather prepared him for that. Here, however, was a new development for which he was not prepared, and the exact meaning and extent of which he did not on the instant grasp. As a rule, no man was so ready in cases of emergency. Now he collapsed utterly. He read the news in the 'Observer' on Sunday morning, and went immediately to the

Westminster Palace Hotel, where he found Davitt. 'He flung himself into a chair in my room,' says Davitt, 'and declared he would leave public life. "How can I," he said, "carry on a public agitation if I am stabbed in the back in this way?" He was wild. Talk of the calm and callous Parnell. There was not much calmness or callousness about him that morning.'

Later in the day he called on Sir Charles Dilke with Mr. Justin McCarthy.

'Parnell,' says Sir Charles, 'called upon me with Mr. Justin McCarthy the morning after the Phœnix Park murders. I never saw a man so cut up in my life. He was pale, careworn, altogether unstrung.'

'On the Sunday after the Phœnix Park murders,' says Mr. Gladstone, 'while I was at lunch, a letter was brought to me from Parnell. I was much touched by it. He wrote evidently under strong emotion. He did not ask me if I would advise him to retire from public life or not. That was not how he put it. He asked me what effect I thought the murder would have on English public opinion in relation to his leadership of the Irish party. Well, I wrote expressing my own opinion, and what I thought would be the opinion of others, that his retirement from public life would do no good; on the contrary, would do harm. I thought his conduct in the whole matter very praiseworthy.'

Mr. John Redmond gives the following 'reminiscence': 'I was in Manchester the night of the Phœnix Park murders. I heard that Cavendish and Spencer had been killed. I went to the police station to make inquiries, but they would not tell me anything. I made a speech condemning the murder of Cavendish, saying the Government was the real cause of the crime. The "Times" reported my speech with the comment that

I said nothing about Burke. Parnell spoke to me on the subject. I told him that I did not know that Burke had been killed when I made the speech. He said, "Write to the 'Times' and say so." I wrote to the "Times." They did not publish the letter.'[1]

A manifesto[2] signed by Parnell, Dillon, and Davitt (who had been released from Dartmoor on that very May 6) was immediately issued 'to the Irish people,' condemning the murders, and expressing the hope that the assassins would be brought to justice. It concluded with these words: 'We feel that no act has ever been perpetrated in our country during the exciting struggles for social and political rights of the past fifty years that has so stained the name of hospitable Ireland as this cowardly and unprovoked assassination of a friendly stranger, and that until the murderers of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke are brought to justice that stain will sully our country's name.'

When the House of Commons met on May 8 Parnell was in his place, looking jaded, careworn, anxious, and depressed. He had won a great victory. He had beaten the Irish Executive. He had drawn the Prime Minister to his side. He had obtained a promise of more concessions, and there was every prospect that the policy of coercion would be abandoned. His success was complete, and now all was jeopardised by a gang of criminal lunatics. He had, so to say, hemmed in the British forces opposed to him, only to find on his flank an enemy whose power for mischief he could not at that moment gauge.

The murders were the one topic referred to in Parlia-

[1] The *Times* subsequently explained that they did not receive the letter.

[2] The manifesto was written by Davitt.

ment on that 8th of May. Parnell made a short, manly, straightforward speech, condemning the outrage in unqualified terms, saying that it was a deadly blow dealt to his party, and expressing the fear that, under the circumstances, the Government would feel constrained to revert to the policy of coercion—a deplorable prospect.

The Government did revert to the policy of coercion. On May 11 Sir William Harcourt (the Home Secretary) introduced a 'Crimes Bill,' based practically upon the lines laid down by Lord Cowper in his letter to Mr. Gladstone already quoted.[1] In certain cases (*inter alia*) trial by judges or by magistrates was substituted for trial by jury, and power was given to the Executive to summon witnesses and to carry on inquiries in secret, even when no person was in custody charged with crime. Mr. Forster had his revenge. The assassins of the Phœnix Park had, for the moment, placed him in a position of triumph. They had in a single hour done more to subdue the spirit of Parnell than he during the whole of his administration. The Irish members, of course, opposed the new Coercion Bill, opposed it even with energy; but it was clear all the time that they, and Parnell especially, fought under the shadow of the crime of May 6. While keenly criticising the details of the measure and rebuking the Government for this backward step, he spoke rather in sorrow than in anger. There was a touch of pathos, a tone of dejection, in his speeches which sounded unusual and strange. Mr. Gladstone especially he treated with the utmost gentleness; nor did he attempt in any way to conceal the bitterness of his conviction that the Phœnix Park murders strengthened the hand of the

[1] *Ante*, p. 328.

Government and weakened his own. He looked and spoke like a man under a cloud. An extract from one of his speeches on the Bill will perhaps suffice to show the character of them all. On May 29 he said: 'We have been contending against the right hon. gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) for two years. We have found him to be a great man and a strong man. I even think it is no dishonour to admit that we should not wish to be fought again in the same way by anybody in the future. I regret that the event in the Phœnix Park has prevented him continuing the course of conciliation that we had expected from him. I regret that owing to the exigencies of his party, of his position in the country, he has felt himself compelled to turn from that course of conciliation and concession into the horrible paths of coercion.'

Nevertheless, the struggle over the measure was protracted. There were many scenes. There was an all-night sitting, and eighteen Irish members were suspended.

Finally the Irish withdrew from the contest, protesting: 'That inasmuch as the Irish parliamentary party have been expelled from the House of Commons under threat of physical force during the consideration of a measure affecting vitally the rights and liberties of Ireland, and as the Government during the enforced absence of the Irish members from the House pressed forward material parts of the measure in committee, thus depriving the representatives of the Irish people of the right to discuss and to vote upon coercion proposals for Ireland; we, therefore, hereby resolve to take no further part in the proceedings in committee on the Coercion Bill, and we cast upon the Government the sole responsibility for a Bill which has been urged

through the House by a course of violence and subterfuge, and which, when passed into law, will be devoid of moral force and will be no constitutional Act of Parliament.'

While it was going through the House Mr. Gladstone brought in the Arrears Bill. As the one measure was based on lines laid down by Lord Cowper, the other was based on lines laid down by Parnell. During his incarceration in Kilmainham he had practically drafted the Bill. Mr. Healy tells a story *à propos* of this subject which curiously illustrates how Parnell's superstitious instincts never deserted him :

'While the Kilmainham treaty was in preparation, and the late Mr. W. E. Forster's throne in Dublin Castle was being sapped by his prisoner from the jail hard by, Mr. Parnell skilfully hit on the idea of availing himself of the introduction of an amending Land Bill, for which the Irish party had won a Wednesday for a second reading debate, as the public basis of his arrangement with Mr. Gladstone. The Bill was afterwards moved by Mr. John Redmond, in April 1882, and one of the clauses became the Government Arrears Act of that year. To frame such a measure in prison legal help of course was necessary, and Parnell asked Mr. Maurice Healy to visit the prison and discuss the matter, which he did for several days.

'Even at so early a date after the passage of the Land Act of 1881 that enactment had been riddled by the judges in provisions vital to the tenants' interest. There was, therefore, a great outcry for amendments, and various proposals were discussed in turn in the prison. One suggestion, however, which my brother made Mr. Parnell refused to adopt. He was pressed again and again as to its necessity, but into the Bill he would not

allow it to go. The enemies of the alleged agrarian *jacquerie* in Ireland little supposed that at its head was a moderate, almost conservative, leader, averse, except when driven to it by the "stokers" of the movement, to lend his approval to extreme demands. Indeed, later on, as his power increased, he grew still more moderate, so that Mr. Biggar once said of him, musingly, "I wonder what are Parnell's real politics!" At all events, by Easter 1882 Mr. Parnell, having obtained a fortnight's release on parole, had effected an understanding with Mr. Chamberlain, who was acting for the anti-Forster section in the Cabinet, and he was extremely anxious for some compromise. He was, therefore, unwilling that the proposed Land Bill should be weighted with unacceptable provisions, so the measure took shape without the clauses which his young adviser recommended. After some days a draft was got ready to be sent across to Westminster, where it was urgently required, as the Bill had to be printed and distributed the following Wednesday. When all was completed a fair copy was taken up to the prison, lest any final revising touches should be required before being posted. Clause by clause the great prisoner went over his Bill, until at last the final page was reached. Then he turned over the leaves again and counted the clauses. Suddenly, having contemplated the reckoning, he threw the manuscript on the table as if he had been stung. "Why," said he, "this will never do!" "What is the matter?" said his solicitor, in alarm. "There are thirteen clauses," said Mr. Parnell; "we can't have thirteen clauses." "But is there anything out of order in that?" asked the other, wondering whether some point of parliamentary practice could be involved. "No," said Mr. Parnell sternly; "but what Bill with

thirteen clauses could have any chance? It would be horribly unlucky." This was a staggerer for the draftsman. Not even the treaty with Mr. Chamberlain and the promise of favourable consideration of the Bill by the Cabinet could induce the wary prisoner to risk a defiance of his boyhood's teaching. His amazed adviser then asked what was to be done—could any clause be omitted? It was late in the afternoon, post hour approached, and another day's delay might prevent the draft reaching the Queen's printers in London in time for distribution to members before the second reading. The humour of the situation did not at all strike the legal mind at this crisis. A hasty dissection of the Bill was made, but only to disclose that it could not well be shorn of a clause. What could be hit upon? There in bewilderment and anxiety stood the statesman and draftsman in her Majesty's prison at Kilmainham, eyeing each other in despair in the darkening cell as the minutes to post hour slipped away. At last a gleam flashed from Mr. Parnell's eyes, half ironical, half triumphant. "I have it," said he. "Add that d——d clause of yours, and that will get us out of the difficulty." It was an inspiration, and so it was done.'[1]

This Arrears Bill (which became law in July and applied only to tenancies under 30*l.*) provided that the tenants' arrears should be cancelled on the following conditions:

1. That the tenant should pay the rent due in 1881.

2. That of the antecedent arrears he should pay one year's rent, the State another.

[1] *Westminster Gazette*, November 2, 1892. 'This clause,' says Mr. Healy, 'though not adopted then, was ultimately embodied in the Tory Land Act of 1887.'

3. That the tenant should satisfy a legal tribunal of his inability to pay the whole of the arrears.

We have seen how Mr. Healy describes Parnell as a man of moderate and even conservative tendencies. The description is true. Never was a revolutionary movement led by so conservative a politician. He was not violent by choice. He was only violent through necessity. When the exigencies of the situation demanded, he never hesitated to raise a popular storm. When the occasion required, he was the first to throw oil upon the troubled waters. At this crisis he desired a calm in public affairs, because the country had got out of hand and he wanted a lull to take his bearings afresh and to shape the future course of the agitation.

On May 6 he had gone to Dartmoor to meet Davitt. They travelled to London together. 'All the the way,' said Davitt, 'he talked of the state of the country, said it was dreadful, denounced the Ladies' Land League, swore at everybody, and spoke of anarchy as if he were a British Minister bringing in a Coercion Bill. I never saw him so wild and angry; the Ladies' Land League had, he declared, taken the country out of his hands, and should be suppressed. I defended the ladies, saying that after all they had kept the ball rolling while he was in jail. "I am out now," said he, "and I don't want them to keep the ball rolling any more. The League must be suppressed, or I will leave public life."

'In August we met at Dublin. The Ladies' League wanted 500*l.* I called on Parnell, at Morrison's Hotel, and asked him for a cheque for that amount. "No," he said, "not a shilling; they have squandered the money given to them, and I shall take care that they get no more." I said: "But, Mr. Parnell, their debts must be

paid whatever happens." But he would not discuss the matter. I left him in a bit of a temper, and would not come back when he sent Dillon for me later in the day. Next day, however, I saw him again. He gave me the cheque. "There," said he, "let those ladies make the most of it. They will get no more money from me, and let the League be dissolved at once."'

I believe the Ladies' Land League was never formally dissolved, but it died of inanition, for Parnell stopped the supplies.

The Land League had been suppressed by the Government.

The Ladies' Land League was practically suppressed by Parnell.

There was now no public organisation. It was necessary to found one. Parnell, however, moved slowly. He had made the Kilmainham treaty. He wished to keep it. 'There is one thing about the man,' said Mr. Forster, 'of which I am quite sure—his word can be relied on.'

It was difficult for him to keep the Kilmainham compact, for the Crimes Act, which violated the letter if not the spirit of the treaty, exasperated the people and made the Government intensely unpopular. Nevertheless Parnell kept his word. 'What are your intentions?' said Mr. Dillon, who thought that the land agitation should still be carried on with fierce energy. 'Do you mean to carry on the war or to slow down the agitation?' 'To slow down the agitation,' said Parnell, with emphasis.

Mr. Davitt wished Land Nationalisation to be made a plank in the new platform.

Parnell said 'No.'

'He was,' says Mr. Davitt, 'opposed to a fresh

land agitation, and wished to keep solely on the Home Rule tack.'

Brennan (who with Davitt and Egan made the working triumvirate of the Land League) denounced Parnell privately for his moderation, said his days of usefulness had gone by, and ultimately left the country in disgust. Before leaving he had asked Parnell to send him on a mission to Australia. Parnell refused point blank, and sent Mr. Redmond instead. Egan (who had already left Ireland) used all his influence to keep the agitation on the old lines, but in vain. No one could prevail against the inexorable Chief.

On August 16 he was presented with the freedom of the City of Dublin. He asked permission to sign the roll in private. He wanted no public demonstration, but the corporation insisted on it. He then made a short speech, warning his audience that an 'Independent Irish Party' could not be maintained 'for any length of time' in the English House of Commons, and urging them to concentrate their energies on that 'great object of reform which has always possessed the hearts of the Irish people at home and abroad, I mean the restoration of the legislative independence of Ireland.'

Afterwards he went to Avondale and Aughavanagh to enjoy a brief period of repose. Mr. John Redmond, who joined him at the latter place, tells the following anecdote *à propos* of Parnell's relations with his people in the country. 'One day,' says Mr. Redmond, 'we were walking up a mountain, and we met an old man, a tenant on the property, named Whitty. "Whitty," said Parnell, "you have been on the land for many years, you never pay me any rent, and all I ask you is to keep the sheep off the mountains when I am out shooting, and, you old villain, you don't even do that."'

'Used he to talk politics to you?' I asked Mr. Redmond. 'No,' he answered, 'his conversation was principally about sporting. He was always looking for gold in Wicklow. Gold, sport, and the applied sciences were his subjects out of Parliament.'

In October the new organisation was founded.

'On the Sunday previous to the convention,' says Mr. Healy, 'I went in the evening to Morrison's Hotel with the draft constitution, which Parnell wished to talk over. This was in the month of October 1882. I found him in bed, and apparently poorly enough. Seeing this I suggested postponing the work of revision. "Oh, no," said he; "it is nothing." After a pause he added, musingly, "Something happens to me always in October." This remark fell from him as if he were announcing a decree of fate, and struck me intensely. October, in Mr. Parnell's horoscope, was a month of "influence," and he always regarded it with apprehension.

'In October 1879 he became President of the Land League, which was then started for the first time, and he was commissioned to visit America to spread the new movement and collect funds. In October 1880 the agrarian agitation in Ireland culminated, and the Government commenced the State prosecutions of that year. Curiously enough, in the same month of that year, for some occult reason, Mr. Parnell divested himself of his beard and made himself almost unrecognisable by the people. In October 1881 he was arrested, and arrested, strange to say, on October 13. In October 1886 he sickened almost to death in the critical autumn following the rejection of the Home Rule Bill. In October of that year also the Plan of Campaign, as he complained, was published by Mr. Harrington without

his authority or that of the Irish party. The result was the enactment of the perpetual Coercion Act of 1887 and the eviction of many tenants, whose fate deeply affected the Irish party in their decision in Room 15 against Mr. Parnell's leadership. Strangest of all, in view of his premonitions, is the fact that it was in the month of October that he died so unexpectedly in 1891. A belief that a particular month might be "influential" would probably react with depressing effect on physical health at the critical period and thus weaken the resisting power at that time. Nevertheless, the stoutest disbeliever in unseen influence will deem the coincidences noteworthy.

'On this Sunday of October 1882, while I worked away at the draft constitution of the National League in Morrison's Hotel, the sick man lay with his face to the wall, replying composedly now and again as to the points which remained to be settled in it. I wrote at a table by his bedside, on which four candles stood lighted. Hours passed by, and being engrossed in the work I did not heed the fact that one of the candles was burning to the socket and finally spluttered itself out. A stir from the patient aroused me, and I looked up. With astonishment I saw that Mr. Parnell had turned round, raised himself in the bed, and, leaning over my table, was furiously blowing out one of the remaining candles. "What on earth is that for?" said I, amazed at this performance. "I want more light than that." His eyes gleamed weirdly in their pale setting as he answered: "Don't you know that nothing is more unlucky than to have three candles burning?" Almost petrified, I confessed that I did not. "Your constitution, then, would have been very successful," said he with quiet sarcasm, and he turned his face to the wall

again, evidently persuaded that his intervention alone had averted some political catastrophe. The conviction which he threw into his words, the instant motion to quench the unlucky candle at some inconvenience to himself and without a warning to me, the strange seer-like face, and the previous forebodings about October, made up a situation which felt almost awesome. It would have been as irreverent to smile as it would be to scoff in the presence of believers at the worship of their unknown gods. Afterwards I learnt that three candles are lit at wakes in Ireland around a corpse—possibly in some distant way to symbolise or reverence the Trinity.'[1]

On October 17 the convention met. Parnell presided. The National League was formed. Home Rule was put in the forefront. Land reform, local self-government, parliamentary and municipal reform came after. The President announced the policy of the future in a brief and pithy speech. He said: 'I wish to affirm the opinion which I have expressed ever since I first stood upon an Irish platform, that until we obtain for the majority of the people of this country the right of making their own laws we shall never be able and we never can hope to see the laws of Ireland in accordance with the wishes of the people of Ireland, or calculated, as they should, to bring about the permanent prosperity of our country. And I would always desire to impress upon my fellow countrymen that their first duty and their first object is to obtain for our country the right of making her own laws upon Irish soil.' Then, turning to the subject of land, he added: 'I wish to re-affirm the belief which I have expressed upon every platform upon which I have stood since the commence-

[1] *Westminster Gazette*, November 3, 1893.

ment of the land agitation—that no solution of the land question can be accepted as a final one that does not insure the occupying farmers the right of becoming owners by purchase of the holdings which they now occupy as tenants.'

Home Rule and a peasant proprietary were, then, the principal planks of the new platform.

Later in the year Parnell sent Mr. Redmond to Australia and to America to collect funds for the League. Mr. Redmond had some strange experiences. 'When I arrived at Sydney,' he says, 'the Phœnix Park murders were the talk of the colony. I received a chilling reception. All the respectable people who had promised support kept away. The priests would not help me, except the Jesuits, who were friendly to me as an old Clongowes boy. The man—a leading citizen—who had promised to take the chair at my first meeting would not come. Sir Harry Parkes, the Prime Minister, proposed that I should be expelled the colony, but the motion was defeated. The Irish working men stood by me, and in fact saved the situation. They kept me going until telegrams arrived exculpating the parliamentary party. Then all the Irish gradually came around and ultimately flocked to my meetings. I collected 15,000*l.* and went to America. Fenians did everything for us there. Without them we could have done nothing. I addressed a great meeting at the Opera House, Chicago. Boyle O'Reilly was in the chair. There were 10,000 people present. It was a grand sight. It was grand to see the Irish united as they were then. I was escorted to the meeting by the Governor and the Mayor, and the streets were lined with soldiers, who presented arms as we passed.'

During the winter Parnell addressed a few meetings

in the country, speaking with studied moderation, and showing clearly that it was his wish to keep things quiet for the present. Alderman Redmond, who travelled with him by train to one of these meetings—from Waterford to Dungarvan and back—has given me the following note of a conversation which took place between them:

'I found Parnell a pleasant companion. He did not like talking, but he listened to you with great attention. I said: "Mr. Parnell, how do you think Home Rule is getting on?" "Very well," he answered. "If the people pull steadily together we shall get it in a few years."

'*Alderman Redmond.* "Surely, Mr. Parnell, the English people are strongly opposed to Home Rule. You will take a long time to bring them round."

'*Parnell.* "They were strongly opposed to Catholic Emancipation, but they had to come round in the end. O'Connell had nothing like our power; he stood almost alone. We have only to fight and stick together, and we will win. We must not yield an inch. You get nothing from the English by yielding."

"*Alderman Redmond.* "But, Mr. Parnell, some people think that we are not fit for Home Rule, that we would misuse it. They say all this in the North."

'*Parnell.* "The North certainly show us a bad example, for they exclude Catholics from all power there. There might be difficulties in working Home Rule at first, but the good sense of the country would make things right after a time. Even the fears of the North would soon be set at rest."

'*Alderman Redmond.* "How would you make Ireland prosper under Home Rule?"

'*Parnell* (laughing). "Well, I will ask you another

question. How can any country prosper that has not the management of its own affairs, of its own income? Do you think England would prosper if she were to allow France to take care of her purse? The income of Ireland is nearly 8,000,000*l.* a year. Where does it all go to? England can do, is doing, what she likes with it. An Irish Government could keep down expenses. Take the one item of police. We could save a million under that head alone. We do not want the costly establishments of England."

'*Alderman Redmond.* "What would you do with the landlords?"

'*Parnell.* "I would treat them fairly and honestly. I would encourage them to live quietly among their own people. I would give them a fair share of parliamentary honours, and I would make them happy in their own country, which they are not at present."

'In returning from Dungarvan to Waterford I said to him, "Well, Mr. Parnell, you made a good, sensible speech to-day." He replied, "I hate public speaking, and always feel nervous before and after I get on a public platform."'

Mr. William Redmond (who had been in Kilmainham with Parnell) made a 'treasonable' speech in Cork towards the end of the year 1882, and subsequently left Ireland. Soon after his departure a warrant was issued for his arrest. Learning this, he wrote to Parnell, expressing his wish to return and 'face the music.' Parnell replied:

Parnell to Mr. William Redmond

'House of Commons: December 6, 1882.

'DEAR MR. REDMOND,—Your letter of the 1st instant to hand, and I am strongly of opinion that you

ought not to return. You should carry out your original programme of going to Nice and looking after your health. If you were to come back now you would be certain to be sentenced to a period of imprisonment with hard labour, and in any case the state of your health will be in a better position to face a prosecution when you return than it is now. I hope, however, that the matter will have blown over by then.

'Yours very truly,

'CHAS. S. PARNELL.'

Mr. Redmond ultimately joined his brother in Australia. When he returned the matter had blown over.[1]

The year 1882 marks one of the darkest periods in the land agitation in Ireland. The following table, submitted by Sir Charles Russell to the Parnell Commission, speaks volumes :[2]

AGRARIAN CRIME FOR THE WHOLE OF IRELAND

—	Two years, 1880-81. Average for two years.	Total in 1882 alone.
Murders	12½	26
Firing at persons . .	45½	58
Incendiary fires and arson .	283	281
Cattle outrages . . .	128	144
Threatening letters . .	1,764	2,009
Firing into dwellings .	105	117
Totals . .	2,338	2,635

[1] 'I was at Parnell's house, Ironsides, Bordenstown, in 1882,' says Mr. William Redmond, 'when Fanny Parnell died. She died very suddenly. One day she went out for a walk. She returned in a great state of excitement with a copy of the *New York Herald* in her hand. It was the time of the Egyptian war, and there was a rumour of an English defeat. I remember well seeing Fanny burst into the drawing room, waving the paper over her head, and saying, "Oh, mother, there is an Egyptian victory. Arabi has whipped the Britishers. It is grand." That was the last time I saw Fanny Parnell alive. Next day she died quite suddenly.'

[2] Sir Charles Russell's speech before the Parnell Commission, p. 294.

It was especially a year of sensational murders. In January, the Huddys, Lord Ardilaun's bailiffs, were killed. In February, Bernard Bailey, an informer, was shot dead in a crowded thoroughfare in Dublin. In March, Joseph McMahon, another informer, was killed. In April, as has been said, Mrs. Smythe was shot dead in open day while driving in a carriage with her brother-in-law from church.[1] In May, the Phœnix Park murders took place. In June, Mr. Walter Bourke, a land agent, Mr. Blake, another land agent, Mr. Keene, a land steward, and Mr. McCausland were killed. In August, the Joyce family were killed at Maamtrasna, because it was said that they knew the murderers of the Huddys and might give evidence against them. In November, an unsuccessful attempt was made to assassinate Mr. Justice Lawson. In the same month, Field, who had served on a jury which had convicted a prisoner charged with the murder of a policeman, was stabbed almost to death just outside his house in North Frederick Street, Dublin. The country reeked with blood. Mr. Forster had hoped to restrain the 'dissolute ruffians' of Ireland. In truth, he had, unwittingly, let them loose.

No man was more deeply concerned by the distracted condition of Ireland in 1882 than Parnell. He was not 'alarmed' because English public opinion was 'shocked.' He had no faith in the fine moral sense of the English. 'Much the English care,' he had said, 'for the shooting of a few landlords in Ireland.' He looked upon the English as a nation of hypocrites. 'They murder and plunder,' he would say, 'all over the world, and then they howl when somebody is killed in Ireland, because the killing is of no use to them.' He

[1] The bullet was intended for her brother-in-law.

would as soon have thought of favouring a plan for the construction of a railway to the moon as appealing to the moral sense of England. Therefore, when moderate men used to say to him, 'Mr. Parnell, you ought to restrain your people; nothing shocks a law-abiding community like the English so much as lawlessness,' he would simply smile. His one idea of dealing with the English was to put them in a tight place. He felt that English party leaders thought as much and no more of the 'morality' of the 'moves' in the game of politics than a chess player thinks of the morality of the moves in a game of chess. An English statesman was to him an individual who would risk his soul to sit on the Treasury bench. It was the duty of the Irish agitator to see that the English statesman should sit on the Treasury bench only on *his* conditions. An outburst of lawlessness in Ireland was regarded by Parnell simply with a view to its effect on the national 'movement.' And, in his opinion, at this moment there was every danger that the extreme wing of his army might, under the evil influences of men who gained the upper hand while he was in jail, run amuck, which could only end in the disorganisation and collapse of the National cause.

Mr. Dillon and Davitt did not see eye to eye with Mr. Parnell. The former, as I have said, was of opinion that the land agitation ought still to be kept at fever heat. The latter thought that there ought to be a new development of that agitation in the direction of land nationalisation. Parnell differed from both and would not yield a jot to either. Mr. Dillon was much incensed and threatened to resign his seat in Parliament. Parnell did not want this. He did not wish to see the smallest rift within the lute; but he would not give way. It was about this time that Mr. Dillon went to Avondale to

ask him point blank if he meant to 'slow down' the agitation. On receiving his Chief's answer, delivered with inexorable precision, and acting on the advice of his medical attendant, Mr. Dillon sailed for Colorado and troubled Parnell no more.

Davitt's opposition was a more serious affair. He was a power. He had the 'Irish World' at his back. He could easily have formed an anti-Parnellite party in America. He could not, of course, have driven Parnell from the position of Irish leader, for all Ireland was now solid for the Chief—the Church, the farmers, and many of the rank and file of the Fenians, who had, contrary to the direction of the supreme council, joined the Land League—but he could have made divisions in the ranks. The 'Irish World' was only too ready to dethrone Parnell, whom Ford disliked for his moderation and his strength. Had Davitt only spoken the word there would probably have been an internecine struggle full of peril to the national interests. Parnell knew this well. The one thing he detested was a quarrel with any set of Irishmen. But he felt that, at all costs, the Extremists should be taught that he was master. He would take money from his American allies. He would remain in alliance with them. But the direction of the national movement should rest in his hands, and in his hands alone. He had no notion of allowing his American auxiliaries to boss the situation, and that they meant to boss it he had not a particle of doubt. America should help, but should not lead Ireland. That was the principle on which he acted.

His feelings towards Davitt were friendly. He had always the warmest sympathies for a man who had suffered so much for Ireland. He always recognised the power and the usefulness of the political convict.

Davitt, we know, was the connecting-link with America, and Parnell's policy was to curb, not break with, the Americans. Davitt had therefore to be kept by his side, while Davitt's pet scheme of Land Nationalisation had to be flung to the winds. It was in the manipulation of affairs of this nature that Parnell excelled. In such cases the charm of his personality, the strength of his character told. He did not conquer you by argument. He threw over you the spell of irresistible fascination, or impressed you with an uneasy sense of relentless authority. I have said that, 'had Davitt only spoken the word there would probably have been an internecine struggle full of peril to the national interests.' He did not speak it. He made no attempt at revolt. He tried to convert Parnell to his views. He failed and submitted.

'Parnell and I differed seriously,' says Davitt, 'but we remained fairly good friends almost to the end.'

From 1882 onwards there was constant friction between Parnell and the Extremists. Nevertheless he held all the Nationalist forces together; he presented an unbroken front to the common enemy. It is dangerous for an Irish leader to be 'moderate.' He runs the risk of exposing himself to the fatal charge of 'Whiggery.' Yet in his 'moderate' days this charge was never levelled at Parnell. Why? Simply because he never won, never wished to win, the applause of the British public. Butt's fate was sealed the moment he fell in any degree under English influence, the moment English cheers in the House of Commons became pleasant to his ears. Parnell never fell in the slightest degree under English influence, and he avoided an English cheer as a skilful pilot would keep clear of the breakers on a rock-bound coast. He did nothing to

please Englishmen at the expense of any Irishman; indeed, he did nothing to please them at all. This gave him his strength. He was asked upon one occasion to move a resolution in public condemning outrages. 'No,' said he; 'I dislike outrages as much as any man, but I am not going to act police for the English Government.' 'Why do you not keep your young barbarians in order, Mr. Parnell?' a friend said to him one night in the House of Commons. 'Ah!' said Parnell, 'I like to see them flesh their spears.'

It was in his moderate days that Parnell spoke the following words, which sank deeply into the Fenian mind: 'I do not wish to attach too much importance to what can be gained by the action of your members in the House of Commons. Much good has resulted, and much good will result, from an independent parliamentary representation, but I have never claimed for parliamentary action anything more than its just share of weight.'

'Extreme' or 'moderate,' Parnell held his ground because the Irish, 'at home and abroad,' were convinced —and he took good care never under any circumstances to weaken the conviction—that he was ever the unchanging enemy of England.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME

CHARLES STEWART PARNELL

VOL. II.

AVONDALE

THE LIFE

OF

CHARLES STEWART PARNELL

1846–1891

BY

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IN TWO VOLUMES—VOL. II.

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THE LIFE

OF

CHARLES STEWART PARNELL

CHAPTER XV

THE CRIMES ACT

THE Government of Lord Spencer soon became as odious as the Government of Lord Cowper. This was inevitable. No English governor can rule Ireland by coercion and win the popular favour. 'The question is,' said Lalor Shiel, 'do you wish to rule Ireland by putting yourselves in contact or in collision with the people?' It was the wish of Lord Spencer to rule Ireland by putting himself in contact with the people. But the Phœnix Park murders forced the Ministry to pass a Coercion Act,[1] which, in the words of Parnell, 'Lord Spencer administered up to the hilt.'

The beginning of the year 1883 was signalised by a series of blunders on the part of the Administration. Mr. Biggar had made a fierce attack upon the Viceroy.

[1] August 16, 1882. There was an autumn session of Parliament in 1882, when the closure, the most effective measure hitherto taken against obstruction, was passed.

Proceedings were taken against him. He was committed for trial. Then the prosecution was suddenly dropped. Mr. William O'Brien published a seditious libel in 'United Ireland.' He was prosecuted and was sent for trial. The jury disagreed, and he was discharged. Mr. Davitt and Mr. Healy were sentenced to six months' imprisonment because they refused to find sureties to keep the peace. They were discharged at the end of three months.[1]

All these measures, feeble in their 'strength,' served only to discredit the Government, to consolidate the Nationalists, to lessen the chances of a split, to improve the position of the Extremists, and to make it more difficult for Parnell to persevere in his efforts to keep the Kilmainham treaty.

[1] 'I delivered a very strong speech,' says Mr. Davitt, 'in view of the possible return of distress, and I threatened that if the Government did not undertake some public works I would call upon the starving peasantry of the west to march down on some fruitful lands which their ancestors were given to make room for cattle. I was prosecuted for that speech under a statute of Edward III., and sentenced to imprisonment or to find bail. I refused to find bail, and was sent to prison. I was released after three months.'—*Davitt's evidence before the Special Commission*, Qs. 86,906–7.

Mr. William O'Brien's article was entitled 'Accusing Spirits,' and it dealt with a subject which at the moment excited a good deal of popular interest. Four men had been hanged for the murder of the Joyces. One of these men, Myles Joyce, asseverated his innocence on the scaffold. The other three prisoners admitted their guilt, but declared in a paper (which had been submitted to the Lord Lieutenant) that Myles Joyce was innocent. Nevertheless he was hanged. Mr. O'Brien, expressing the popular view, denounced the Government as judicial murderers. Curiously enough the judge—the late Lord Justice Barry—who tried the prisoners was much impressed by the statement of the three men who asserted the innocence of Myles Joyce. 'The evidence against Myles Joyce,' he said subsequently to an Irish Q.C., 'seemed to me to be as strong as the evidence against the other prisoners, and yet I find it very difficult to believe that these three men (who did not deny their own guilt) should on the verge of the grave have insisted on the innocence of Myles Joyce if he were guilty too.' Rightly or wrongly, the people of the district believed in the innocence of Myles Joyce, and his execution made the Government intensely unpopular.

The Executive, however, showed more vigour in their pursuit of the Phœnix Park murderers. In January they were arrested. In February the public inquiry began. There was startling evidence; there were 'astounding revelations.' As the investigation proceeded Englishmen cherished the hope that proof of complicity in the crime would be brought home to the parliamentary party, perhaps to Parnell himself, and that the 'Home Rule bubble' would thus at length be effectually pricked. One of the murderers, James Carey, turned informer, and gave everyone away. Carey was a Home Ruler. He was personally known to several of the Irish members, one of whom had proposed him as a member of the Dublin Town Council. The knives with which the murders were committed had been concealed in the London office of the National League. They had been brought to Dublin by Mrs. Frank Byrne, the wife of the paid secretary of the English organisation. Byrne himself was *particeps criminis*.

These revelations whetted the English appetite, and every day the newspaper reports were eagerly scanned in the expectation of finding that the Irish members themselves were involved in the plots of the 'Invincibles.' 'This,' Sir William Harcourt is reported to have said, 'will take the starch out of the boys.'

Mr. Forster would have been more than human if he did not take advantage of the public excitement and the public sympathy—for the Phœnix Park inquiry proved that his life had been almost constantly in danger—to strike at Parnell, and even at the Ministry. An amendment to the Address (moved by Mr. Gorst), expressing the hope that the recent change in Irish

policy would be maintained, that no further concessions would be made to lawless agitators, and that the secret societies would continue to receive the energetic vigilance of the Government, gave him his chance.

On February 22 he came down to the House full of fight and bent on vengeance. He had been thrown over by Mr. Gladstone at the instigation of one of his colleagues in the Cabinet and under the skilful manipulation of Parnell, who had used the hostility of that colleague to accomplish his overthrow. He would now expose his enemies. He would show that the man with whom Mr. Gladstone had treated, with whom Mr. Chamberlain had intrigued, was the enemy of England, and the head of a lawless and rebellious agitation aimed at the very heart of the Empire. He had a popular theme, and he did it justice. His indictment of Parnell was trenchant and eloquent, pitched in a key which pleased old Whigs and delighted young Tories. The Opposition roared themselves hoarse with joy at every sentence, not merely because the oration was calculated to damage Parnell, but much more because it was calculated to bring discredit on the Government.

The whole Liberal party would have cheered vociferously too, but they felt that the ex-Chief Secretary was girding at their own leader as well as at the Irish 'rebel' whom they abhorred, and this consideration kept them in restraint. In the speech itself there was nothing new. It was, in fact, based on a pamphlet published some months before by Mr. Arnold Forster entitled 'The Truth about the Land League' —a pamphlet made up of extracts from the inflammatory and seditious speeches and newspaper articles of the Leaguers. Mr. Forster spoke from this brief,

and proved himself an able, an adroit, a vehement advocate. He certainly had a sympathetic jury to address, but he deserves the credit of having played upon their feelings, their passions, and their prejudices with complete success. The burden of the speech may be summed up in a sentence spoken by Mr. Gladstone himself on another occasion: 'Crime dogged the footsteps of the League.' For this crime, the 'outcome of the agitation,' Mr. Forster held Parnell, the leader 'of the agitation,' responsible. This was the gravamen of the indictment:

'My charge is against the hon. member for the city of Cork. . . . It has been often enough stated and shown by statistics that murder followed the meetings and action of the Land League. Will the hon. member deny and disprove that statement? I will repeat again what the charge is which I make against him. Probably a more serious charge was never made by any member of this House against another member. It is not that he himself directly planned or perpetrated outrages or murders, but that he either connived at them or, when warned, did not use his influence to prevent them.'

This was Mr. Forster's case. What thoughts passed through Parnell's mind while he sat listening to the indictment, hearing the wild cheers with which it was received, and watching the angry glances flashed at himself from almost every part of the House?

He stood arraigned of high crimes and misdemeanours at the bar of English public opinion. Of all the agitators he had been singled out as the chief criminal; he alone was to be cast to the lions. Yet what was the exact measure of his guilt? He was certainly the 'head of the organisation.' He had

favoured a 'forward policy,' united extreme and moderate men, kept the agitation at fever heat, and fanned the flame of discontent into a blaze which overwhelmed the enemies of his country. What was the result? A measure of reform which revolutionised the system of land tenure in Ireland, and, despite grave defects, gave the masses of the people a chance—long withheld—of working out their own salvation by honest labour and industrious exertion. He had certainly never acted 'police' for the British Government; he never would. He had never stretched forth a hand to arrest any movement tending to sap the foundation of British authority in Ireland, and he never would. Yet from the passing of the Land Act in 1881 to the hour of Mr. Forster's indictment his influence had been used to hold the Extremists in check; not, indeed, in the interests of England, not under the pressure of English opinion, but in the interest of Ireland, and under the pressure of the conviction that, for her sake, the time had come to slow down the agitation. He met with opposition in his own ranks, made enemies in America, ran the risk of disunion; nevertheless he was bent on playing the part of moderator when, in the autumn of 1881, he was attacked by the English Press, denounced by the Prime Minister, and flung into jail by Mr. Forster. On his release he took up the work of slowing down the agitation precisely where he had left it on the day of his arrest. He had made a treaty with the Prime Minister, and was doing all in his power to keep it, though the Prime Minister had thrown almost insurmountable obstacles in his way. Determined on a 'truce of God,' he had incurred the displeasure of Davitt, earned the enmity of the 'Irish World,' and

been constrained to dispense with the services of Mr. Dillon, Mr. Egan, and Mr. Brennan.

It was at this moment, when all his efforts were being used to keep the peace in Ireland, that Mr. Forster decided to hold him up to public odium as a criminal, with whom no honourable man could associate. But what was Mr. Forster, what was English opinion, to him? He had to think of his own countrymen, and of his own countrymen only. Mr. Forster's attack and the English cheers which welcomed it would serve him with them. That was the main fact. The answer to the Extremists, who called him a reactionary, would be Forster's speech; thus fortified he could moderate the agitation without exposing himself to the odious charge of Whiggery. He could hold them in check without forfeiting his reputation as an advanced politician; he could keep all the Nationalist forces together without breaking the treaty of Kilmainham. The expression—sometimes indifferent, sometimes scornful, sometimes sinister—which passed over his face while Mr. Forster was speaking faithfully reflected the thoughts within. Only for an instant did he show the least sign of emotion. It was when the late Chief Secretary said: 'It is not that he himself directly planned or perpetrated outrages and murders, but that he either connived at them, or, when warned——' 'It is a lie,' cried Parnell, darting a fierce glance at his antagonist, and relapsing again into silence. When Mr. Forster sat down, everyone expected that Parnell would spring to his feet to repel the charges hurled at him. But he quietly kept his seat. There was a painful pause, an awful silence. Parnell did not stir. The whole House swayed with emotion. His own party were touched by the scene and stung by the

onslaught made upon him; he alone remained unmoved. 'Parnell, Parnell,' English members shouted again and again. A scornful smile was Parnell's only response. The discussion seemed about to collapse when an English member interposed to avert a division. The Irish members got around their Chief, and urged him to reply on the instant. He refused. His colleagues persevered. Finally he yielded to their importunities, and at the close of the night's proceedings moved the adjournment of the debate. 'He did not want to answer Forster at all,' says Mr. Justin McCarthy; 'we had to force him.'

On February 23 the House met in a state of intense excitement. The approaches were thronged, the lobbies crowded, the galleries full; members themselves had scarcely standing room. Among the distinguished strangers who looked down upon the scene the portly figure of the Prince of Wales and the refined, ascetic face of Cardinal Manning were conspicuous.

Parnell sat amongst his followers, calm, dignified, frigid, quietly awaiting the summons of the Speaker to resume the debate. It came. He rose slowly and deliberately, and in chilling, scornful accents began: 'I can assure the House that it is not my belief that anything I can say at this time will have the slightest effect on the public opinion of this House, or upon the public opinion of the country' (a pause); then, raising his head proudly, looking defiantly around, and speaking with marked emphasis: 'I have been accustomed during my political life to rely upon the public opinion of those whom I have desired to help, and with whose aid I have worked for the cause of prosperity and freedom in Ireland, and the utmost I desire to do in the very few words I shall address to the House is to

make my position clear to the Irish people at home and abroad.'

Every British member was disgusted with these opening sentences. The Irish 'prisoner' repudiated the jurisdiction of the court; there would be no apology, no explanation, no defence. 'Defiance' was the watchword of this incorrigible enemy. But the Irish members cheered as only Irish members can cheer. Parnell had struck a keynote which would reverberate throughout Ireland and America.

What was England to him or to them? Parnell in effect continued. Mr. Forster had asked many questions. What right had Mr. Forster to interrogate him? Who was Mr. Forster? A discredited politician, who had been repudiated by his own party, and whose administration of Ireland had been an ignominious failure. He (Parnell) had, forsooth, according to Mr. Forster, been deposed from his place of authority. If that were so, he had consolation in knowing that Mr. Forster had been deposed too. But the fact was that he (Parnell) still possessed the confidence of his fellow-countrymen, while Mr. Forster was left out in the cold. Upon what did the accusation against him rest? Upon speeches and newspaper articles, made or written by others, and which he had not even read. But it was idle for him to try to strike a responsive chord in that House.

'I say it is impossible to stem the torrent of prejudice that has arisen out of the events of the past few days. I regret that the officials charged with the administration of this Act are unfit for their posts. I am sure the right hon. gentleman, the present Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, must admit that to the fullest extent, and when he looks round on the right hon. member for Bradford, he must say, "Why am I

here while he is there?" Why was he (Mr. Forster) deposed—he, the right hon. gentleman who has acquired experience in the administration of Ireland—who, according to his own account, knew everything, although he was almost invariably wrong? Why was he deposed, and the right hon. gentleman (Mr. Trevelyan), a 'prentice, although a very willing hand, put in his position? I feel that the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant must say with the Scriptures, "I am not worthy to unloose his shoe latchet." It would be far better to have the Act administered by the seasoned politician now in disgrace and retirement. Call him back to his post; send him to help Lord Spencer in the congenial work of the gallows in Ireland. Send him to look after the secret inquisitions in Dublin Castle. Send him to distribute the taxes which an unfortunate and starving peasantry have to pay for crimes not committed by themselves. All this would be congenial work for the right hon. gentleman. We invite you to man your ranks, and to send your ablest and best men to push forward the task of misgoverning and oppressing Ireland. For my part I am confident as to the future of Ireland. Although the horizon may be clouded, I believe our people will survive the present oppression, as they have survived many and worse misfortunes, and although our progress may be slow, it will be sure. The time will come when this House and the people of this country will admit, once again, that they have been deceived, and that they have been cheered by those who ought to be ashamed of themselves; that they have been led astray as to the right mode of governing a noble, a brave, a generous, and an impulsive people; that they will reject their present leaders, who are conducting them into the

terrible courses into which the Government appear determined to lead Ireland. Sir, I believe they will reject these guides and leaders with as much determination, and just as much relief, as they rejected the services of the right hon. gentleman the member for Bradford.'

When Parnell ended I was in the Lobby. There was a rush from the House. I met an English Liberal member. I asked, 'How has Parnell done?' He answered, 'Very badly. He has made no reply at all. He has ignored the whole matter, and says that he cares only for the opinion of Ireland; but it won't go down in this country.' Later on I met an Irish member. I said: 'What do you think of Parnell's speech?' He replied, 'Splendid! He just treated them in the right way; declined to notice Forster's accusations, said he cared only for Irish opinion, and that Ireland would stand by him. Quite right; that is the way to treat the House of Commons.'

The following account of the scene from the pen of a British politician of Cabinet rank is fair and judicial:

'Two things were remarkable about Mr. Parnell in the House of Commons—his calm self-control, and his air of complete detachment from all English questions, coupled with indifference to English opinion. Never were these more conspicuous than on the night when, at the beginning of the session of 1883, Mr. W. E. Forster, no longer bound by the trammelling reserve of office, delivered an elaborate and carefully prepared attack upon him. The ex-Chief Secretary had accumulated a number of instances of outrages, and incitement to outrage, perpetrated or delivered in Ireland, and of the language used from time to time by Irish members encouraging, or palliating, or omitting to

condemn these acts, and summed up his long indictment by arraigning Mr. Parnell as the author of these offences. Though far from being an eloquent speaker or an agreeable one to listen to, Mr. Forster was in his way powerful, putting plenty of force and directness into his speeches. On this occasion he was more direct and telling than I ever remember him; and it was easy to see that personal dislike and resentment, long pent up, entered into the indictment. Someone compared it to the striking of a man over the face with repeated blows of a whip, so much fierce vehemence burnt through it all. Everyone had listened with growing excitement and curiosity to see how Mr. Parnell would take it and what defence he would make.

'Next day Parnell rose to reply, amid breathless silence, perfectly cool and quiet. He had shown no signs of emotion during the long harangue, and showed none now. To everyone's astonishment he made no defence at all. With a dry, careless, and almost contemptuous air, he said that for all his words and acts in Ireland he held himself responsible to his countrymen only, and did not the least care what was thought or said about him by Englishmen.

'By the judgment of the Irish people only did he and would he stand or fall.

'These words, pronounced with the utmost deliberation in his usual frigid voice, but with a certain suppressed intensity beneath the almost negligent manner, produced a profound effect. Most were shocked and indignant. Those who reflected more deeply perceived what a gulf between England and Ireland was opened, or rather revealed as existing already, by such words. They saw, too, that as a

matter of tactics this audacious line was the best the Irish leader could take. What he had done could not be defended to such an audience as the House of Commons. The right course was, as lawyers say, "to plead to the jurisdiction," and to deny the competence of the House, as a predominantly English body, to judge him. Mr. Forster's speech did, of course, produce an effect on English opinion, and quotations were often made from it. But as Mr. Parnell could not have refuted many (at least) of its statements, he lost nothing by his refusal to meet them, and his defiance of English opinion both pleased his own friends and made the English feel the hopelessness of the situation. It wanted a strong will and great self-command, as well as perfect clearness of view, to hold this line under the exasperating challenges of Mr. Forster.

'Mr. Parnell was an extraordinary parliamentary tactician. Nobody except Mr. Gladstone surpassed him, perhaps nobody else equalled him. Mr. Gladstone was the only person he really feared, recognising in him a force of will equal to his own, an even greater fertility of resource.'

The Phœnix Park inquiry—the peg upon which Forster had hung his speech—was soon over. The prisoners were committed for trial. Five were hanged, nine were sent into penal servitude.

Of course the attempt to connect the Irish members with the crime failed utterly.

I had a conversation with Lord Spencer upon this subject, and upon the charge generally that Parnell and the Irish party helped to get up outrages.

He said: 'I never could get any trace that either he or any of his party were concerned in getting up outrages, and I stated this publicly in a speech at

Newcastle. I remember very well Parnell sending someone to me, I think it was Mr. Morley, on an occasion when he had been bitterly attacked in the House of Commons about crime, to let him know what I said in my Newcastle speech. I wrote out what I had said for him on a large sheet of foolscap paper.

'I went to the House of Commons the night that he was to defend himself. He was interrupted as he went along, and in the middle of this interruption he put his hand in his pocket and, greatly to my surprise, pulled out the sheet of paper on which I had written the extract from my speech for him, and then he read it right out to the House, just as I had written it. I think Parnell disliked crime, but he never publicly condemned it.'

About a month after Forster's attack Parnell introduced a Bill to amend the Land Act of 1881. Most of the provisions of this measure have since become law, but they were all scornfully rejected then.[1]

Some weeks later another measure of Irish significance was run through the House of Commons at a

[1] Whigs and Tories united in voting against the Bill, which was defeated by 250 to 63 votes. The provisions have been summarised by the *Annual Register* thus:

'The Bill provided for the inclusion of certain classes which were left out of the Act of 1881, such as the leaseholders and occupiers of town parks. It further proposed to extend the operation of the purchase clauses. The chief provisions of the measure were:

'1. The dating of the judicial rent from the gale day succeeding the application to fix the fair rent.

'2. Power to the court to suspend proceedings for ejectment and recovery of rent pending the fixing of a fair rent on the payment by the tenant of a rent equal to the Poor Law valuation of his holding.

'3. A definition of the term "improvement" as any work or agricultural operation executed on the holding which adds to the value of the holding, or any expenditure of capital and labour on the holding which adds to its letting value.

'4. Direction to the court that, in fixing fair rent, the increase in the letting value of the holding arising from improvements effected by the tenant or his predecessor in title shall belong to the tenant, and the

single sitting. This was the Explosives Bill—Parliament's response to the dynamite plots of American Extremists. Parnell did not oppose the Bill. He wrote to Mr. Justin McCarthy:

Parnell to Mr. Justin McCarthy

'Monday.

'My dear McCarthy,—I have been unable to go out of doors since I saw you on Friday, but am somewhat better to-day, and hope to be able to return to the House to-morrow (Tuesday). Please inform T. P. of this, as I should like to see him to-morrow.

'I do not know what the party have decided to do about the Explosives Bill, but I think it would be well not to oppose it on the first or second reading stage, but to confine ourselves to pointing out that it is far too wide and vague in its provisions and will require alteration in committee. If the Government desire to take the committee stage to-night, I do not think you ought to oppose them, as postponing it till to-morrow or Wednesday will only result in depriving us of opportunities for discussing two Irish questions of importance. However, I think the different stages of the Bill should be made to last throughout the evening until half-past twelve.

'As regards alterations in committee:

landlord shall not be permitted to ask for an increase of rent in respect of such increase of letting value.

'5. The use and enjoyment by the tenant of his improvements shall not be held to be compensation for such improvement.

'6. The presumption as regards the making of the improvement to be for the future in favour of the tenant.

'7. Power given to leaseholders and to holders of town parks of applying to the court to fix a fair rent; and, lastly, the Land Commission to be permitted to advance the full amount of purchase money, and in the case of holdings under 30*l.* the period of repayment is to be extended over 52 years instead of 35 years.'—*Annual Register*, 1883, p. 65.

'1. It appears to me that the Bill is not retrospective in its character, but if there is any doubt about it an amendment should be moved so as to ensure that it shall *not* be retrospective; otherwise this point had best not be alluded to by us.

'2. The second clause should be amended so as to secure that the explosion of cartridges or gunpowder in an ordinary gun, pistol, or other firearm shall not come within the section, otherwise nobody could discharge a gun or pistol for sporting or other purposes.

'3. The third clause should be amended in a similar way, otherwise nobody would be able to have or carry a pistol or ammunition for his personal protection.

'4. Sub-section [——] of clause 4 should also be modified in a similar direction; and, with regard to the carriage of blasting materials, railways should be compelled to receive and carry consignments of such materials from any licensed maker or magazine, as at present they refuse to carry them, and the only way to get them is to send a special messenger, who is obliged to convey them surreptitiously, and under such circumstances as to give rise to a reasonable suspicion.

'5. The 5th clause should be altered by the insertion of the word "knowingly" before "procures."

'6. Clause 6 is a very objectionable one, giving the right of private examination, which is being so much abused in Ireland at present. An attempt might be made to modify it in the following direction:

'(1) That the inquiry should take place in public if the witness desire it.

'(2) That he should be entitled to have a legal adviser present.

'(3) That no witness should be kept under exami-

nation for more than two hours at a stretch, or for more than six hours in any one day.

'(4) That he should be permitted a suitable interval during his examination each day for the purpose of obtaining refreshment, but that no refreshment should be given him by the Crown.

'(5) That where a witness is imprisoned for refusing to answer questions, the total period of imprisonment shall be limited to six months, and that he shall not again be imprisoned for refusing to answer questions in respect of such crime.

'(6) That where a person is imprisoned for refusing to answer, he or his legal adviser shall be furnished with memorandum of the question, and [of] any statement made by the prisoner in explanation of his refusal to reply, or in partial reply to such question, and such prisoner shall be entitled to apply on affidavit to the Court of Queen's Bench for his release, on the ground that his refusal to answer was justified by his inability to answer, or other reasonable cause, or that he had not refused to answer or had answered such questions to the best of his ability.

'These appear to me to be some of the points worthy of attention in the Bill, and in reference to which exertions should be made to alter it.

'Truly yours,

'CHAS. S. PARNELL.

'P.S.—I omitted to say that the duration of the Bill should be limited to three years, and Ireland should be excluded from its operation on the ground that the Crimes Act is sufficient. 'C. S. P.'

On April 25 there was a great Irish convention at Philadelphia. Parnell was invited, and urged to

attend. His parliamentary followers were divided on the question whether he should go or not. He decided for himself. He did not go. He sent the following cablegram instead:

'My presence at the opening of the most representative convention of Irish-American opinion ever assembled being impossible, owing to the necessity of my remaining here to oppose the Criminal Code Bill—which re-enacts permanently the worst provisions of coercion, and which, if passed, will leave constitutional movements at the mercy of the Government—I would ask you to lay my views before the convention. I would respectfully advise that your platform be so framed as to enable us to continue to accept help from America, and at the same time to avoid offering a pretext to the British Government for entirely suppressing the national movement in Ireland. In this way only can unity of movement be preserved both in Ireland and America. I have perfect confidence that by prudence, moderation, and firmness the cause of Ireland will continue to advance; and, though persecution rest heavily upon us at present, before many years have passed we shall have achieved those great objects for which through many centuries our race has struggled.'[1]

[1] The London correspondent of the *Nation* wrote on April 21: 'The question of the advisability of Mr. Parnell's attending the forthcoming Irish convention at Chicago (*sic* Philadelphia) was, as the newspapers state, considered and resolved upon by a meeting of his colleagues a few days ago. The view of the majority was strongly opposed to his so doing. Weighty reasons were adduced by them in support of their view; but reasons were also given on the other side. We must all hope that the best and wisest thing has been done; but if a newspaper correspondent may express an opinion on so important and complicated a question, I would say that I had much rather the decision had gone the other way. The proceedings of the convention have been looked forward to with great interest by everyone here. It is said that the plain issue to be determined there, is whether the use of physical force of all kinds—dynamite

The result of the convention was the formation of a National League of America [1] to co-operate with the National League of Ireland.

Partisans at one side have said that the National League of America was nothing more nor less than a Clan-na-Gael association; partisans on the other, that it was independent of the Clan-na-Gael altogether. The truth lies between these extremes. There were hundreds of members of the League who did not belong to the Clan; nevertheless the Clan, without absorbing, controlled the League.

It is idle to shirk the truth. The National League of America was run by the Revolutionists, who were only held in check, so far as they were held in check at all, by the fact that they had Parnell to count with. So much for the National League of America.[2]

It has been said in allusion to Parnell's counsels of moderation at this period that he was 'submerged' during the years 1883 and 1884. This statement is only true, if true at all, in a limited sense; for whenever his presence was necessary he came quickly enough to the surface. Thus in the summer of 1883 a vacancy occurred in the representation of Monaghan. Parnell

included—may not properly be employed by the Irish people in their struggle for the liberation of their country from British rule. To take the affirmative side of the discussion would, putting all other considerations aside, hardly be a safe thing for anyone who would contemplate returning to and living in any part of the so-called United Kingdom, least of all would it be safe for a member of the British Parliament. On the other hand, it would be no easy task to argue before an Irish-American audience that the use of force by Ireland, or by any other oppressed nation, for the recovery of its liberties would be immoral.'

[1] In place of the American Land League.

[2] Towards the end of 1883 the Clan-na-Gael was divided into two branches, the one called 'The United Brotherhood'; the other (under the presidency of Mr. Alexander Sullivan) 'The Triangle'—a name derived from the fact that the government consisted of a committee of three.

at once seized the opportunity to invade the North and to bombard the strongholds of Unionism. The tenant-farmers of Monaghan cared little for Home Rule. They cared much for the land. Parnell accordingly sent Mr. Healy—the hero of the Land Act of 1881—to storm the Ulster citadel. He himself appeared upon the scene, and plunged into the struggle with characteristic *élan*. The following incident of the campaign shows that Parnell's superstitious instincts did not desert him, even in the heat of the battle.

'The night before the polling,' says Mr. Healy, 'we found ourselves in the comfortable hotel at Castleblayney, exhausted by dusty driving and incessant speaking through a long summer day. We ordered dinner and were shown to our rooms. The rooms adjoined, and immediately after closing my door I heard Parnell's voice in the corridor ordering his apartment to be changed. Apparently there was a difficulty about this, as the hotel was crowded for the election next day. Knowing he was not in the least a stickler for luxury or hard to please about a room, I went out to ask what was the matter. There he was, standing in the passage opposite his bedroom door, with his bag in his hand, evidently chafing and very much put out. "Look at that," said he, pointing to the number on his door. It was No. 13. "What a room to give me! They are Tories, I suppose, and have done it on purpose." I laughed and said, "Take mine; let us exchange." "If you sleep in that room," said he, "you will lose the election." I looked into it, and found a good roomy chamber, much better than the one allotted to me, and I said so, pointing out that the "Tory" hotel-keeper had probably given him the best room in the house. He was not to be pacified, however, so

without arguing the matter I put him into my room, and installed myself in his. "I tell you, you will lose the election," he repeated, as I took refuge in No. 13.'[1]

The election, however, was not lost. Mr. Healy was placed at the head of the poll by a handsome majority.[2]

The Monaghan victory roused the Ulster landlords. The Orangemen took the field against the 'invaders.' The invaders pressed forward everywhere, determined to improve their position in the northern province. There were demonstrations and counter-demonstrations, marching and counter-marching, Nationalist displays and Orange displays, until the province rang with the oratorical artillery of the opposing parties.

'Compel the rebel conspirators,' urged an Orange placard, 'to return to their haunts in the south and west.' 'We are not an aggressive party,' said an Orange orator, Mr. Murray Ker, D.L. 'Let there be no revolver practice. My advice to you about revolvers is, never use a revolver except you are firing at someone.'

'If the Government,' said Lord Claud Hamilton, 'fail to prevent Mr. Parnell & Co. from making inroads into Ulster . . . if they do not prevent those hordes of ruffians from invading us, we will take the law into our own hands.'

'Keep the cartridge in the rifle,' said the degenerate Home Ruler, Col. King Harman. 'Keep a firm grip on your sticks,' said Mr. Archdale. 'Only for the police and soldiers,' exclaimed Major Saunderson, 'those rebels would have been in the nearest river.'

[1] *Westminster Gazette*, November 3, 1893.

[2] Mr. Healy was replaced in the representation of Wexford by Mr. William Redmond.

The Government proclaimed an Orange meeting at which Lord Rossmore was to preside. 'It is a great pity,' said his Lordship, referring to this action of the authorities, 'that the so-called Government of England stopped loyal men from assembling to uphold their institutions here, and had sent down a handful of soldiers whom we could eat up in a second or two if we thought fit. The Orangemen, if they liked, could be the Government themselves. I only wish they were allowed, and they would soon drive rebels like Parnell and his followers out of their sight.'

Despite Orange violence and Orange threats the Nationalists did their work in Ulster, and did it well, as the General Election of 1885 proved.[1]

Parnell himself 'lay low' after the Monaghan election, allowing his lieutenants to conduct the campaign in Ulster and elsewhere. He had for some time been in financial difficulties. The fact got abroad, and the people resolved to relieve him of his embarrassments. He told the story himself in his accustomed laconic style to the Special Commission: 'A mortgage on my estate was foreclosed, and I filed a petition for its sale. This fact, somehow or other, got into the newspapers, and the Irish people raised a collection for me to pay off the mortgage. The amount of the collection considerably exceeded the amount necessary.'

The Parnell tribute (as this 'collection' came to be called) was a remarkable expression of popular confi-

[1] 'Unfortunately, however,' said Mr. Trevelyan, then Irish Secretary, 'the counter-demonstrations of the Orangemen were, to a great extent, demonstrations of armed men. At their last meeting at Dumore sackfuls of revolvers were left behind, close to the place of meeting. . . . The Orange meetings were bodies of armed men . . . So far as the Government knew, it was not the custom of the Nationalists to go armed to their meetings until the bad example was set by the Orangemen.'—*Hansard.*

dence and enthusiasm. Seizing the opportunity which Parnell's embarrassments gave them, priests and people combined to give him a substantial proof of their regard, affection, and gratitude. Inaugurated at the beginning of the year, the fund increased gradually at first, and afterwards by leaps and bounds, until before the end of the year it reached nearly 40,000*l.*[1] This munificent gift in itself bore striking testimony to Parnell's popularity. But an incident occurred some time after the subscription lists had been opened which showed in a more remarkable way still his hold on the mind and heart of the nation.

The Pope had never looked with favour on the Land League agitation. Indeed, he regarded it as nothing more nor less than a revolt against the lawfully constituted authorities, which in truth it was. And now Catholic bishops and priests and people of Ireland were uniting to place the Protestant leader of the revolt on a pedestal of glory. There were not wanting, it is said, English agents at Rome who readily used the Parnellite tribute as a lever to move the Pope against the agitators. The Irish were losing the faith; even their religious guides had been led astray, and nothing but the interference of the Pontiff could avert the dangers which imperilled the very salvation of the people. So it was whispered and believed at the Vatican. Impressed by these representations, the Pope acted with vigour and promptitude. A letter, signed by Cardinal Simeoni, Prefect, and Monseigneur Dominico Jacobini, Secretary of the Sacred Congregation de propaganda Fide, was despatched to the Irish bishops condemning the 'tribute' and calling upon them to give it no countenance. Of course the bishops obeyed

[1] The amount of the mortgage was about 13,000*l.*

this mandate, and the priests henceforth ceased to take any public part in collecting subscriptions. But the people heeded not the papal letter. They saw nothing in it but the hand of England. Certain facts were subsequently revealed which seemed to show that the suspicions of the people were not without some foundation. These facts may now be related.

Towards the end of 1882 an Irish Catholic Whig member (Mr. George Errington) went to Rome—on 'his own affairs,' it was said. Before starting, however, he called at the Foreign Office, told Lord Granville of his intended visit, and said that he might have an opportunity of discussing Irish affairs with the Pope. Lord Granville there and then gave him a letter of recommendation, which he had authority to show to the papal Secretaries of State. In the beginning of 1883 we find this gentleman practically filling the post of English Envoy at the Vatican. The Government wished to use the Pope to put down Parnell, and to control Irish affairs generally in the English interest. The Pope was anxious to re-establish diplomatic relations with England. Here was a basis of negotiation. Lord Granville dared not, in the light of day, send a diplomatic mission to the Pope. English public opinion would not stand that. But he thought that a private channel of communication might be opened through Mr. Errington, and that thus Downing Street could be kept in touch with the Vatican. 'What was thought of Errington at Rome?' I asked an official of the Papal Court when the Errington mission had become a matter of history. 'Oh,' he answered, 'we looked upon him as an English envoy. I remember in those days whenever I called to see Cardinal —— I was habitually told that I could

not see him; Errington was constantly closeted with the Cardinal. When he walked about in the vicinity of the Vatican the Swiss Guards saluted him. He was looked upon as a man of authority. It is easy for the English Government to repudiate Mr. Errington now, but they gave him the means of holding himself out to us as their agent.' The English Envoy used his influence to discredit the Irish agitators—lay and clerical.

One story will suffice to show how the Vatican regarded the Irish movement about this time. 'Had you been in Italy,' said Cardinal —— to an Irish ecclesiastic, 'in the time of Garibaldi you would have supported Garibaldi.' 'Yes, your Eminence,' said the Irishman, 'I would have supported Garibaldi if he had had at his back the bishops and priests and people of Italy.'

Despite all attempts at secrecy, the Errington mission became a public fact, and Ministers were forced to admit in the House of Commons that Mr. Errington had received a letter of recommendation from Lord Granville, and that his despatches from Rome were deposited, like the despatches of any other ambassador or envoy, in the archives of the Foreign Office. In Ireland the papal rescript was at once ascribed to Mr. Errington's handiwork.

England had secretly sought the services of the Pope, her ancient enemy, to strike at the Irish leader and the Irish movement. Could the force of England's meanness further go? 'If we want to hold Ireland by force,' said an English member[1] in the House of Commons, 'let us do it ourselves—let us not call in the Pope, whom we are always attacking, to help us.' The Irish were not irritated with the Pope. Their anger

[1] Mr. Joseph Cowen.

was wholly directed against the English Liberal Ministry, which, while constantly denouncing them as the creatures of Rome, had invoked the thunder of the Vatican to overwhelm a political opponent. The practical question now was, how the Pope and England should be answered. There was only one way of answering them. By making the Parnell tribute a conspicuous success. All Ireland worked for this end. Subscriptions, which before the rescript came in hundreds, now came in thousands, until a few months after its appearance the grand total of 37,000*l.* was reached. The English Ministers might have chuckled when the rescript[1] was issued. They did not chuckle when the tribute was closed. Then they realised the folly of invoking the aid of the Pope to crush an Irish popular leader.

'May I ask,' I said to Mr. Gladstone, 'if Cardinal Manning ever gave you any help in your relations with Parnell?' He answered: 'Never. He had, I think, something to do with the Errington mission[2]—a very foolish affair. Spencer thought it might do some good, and so I tried it. It did no good. Why, it is absurd to suppose that the Pope exercises any influence in Irish politics.' In order to dispose of the Errington mission at once, I may here, though anticipating dates, insert a letter from Mr. Errington to Lord Granville. It was written in May 1885. Cardinal McCabe had recently died. The question of his successor in the archiepiscopal see of Dublin was under consideration. Dr. Walsh, of Maynooth, was the popular favourite.

[1] The papal rescript was dated May 11, 1883. On that day the Parnell tribute amounted to 7,688*l.* 11*s.* 5*d.* On June 19 it amounted to 15,102*l.* On December 11 it reached the grand total of 37,011*l.* 17*s.*

[2] I understand that Cardinal Manning was opposed to the Errington mission.

Dr. Moran, of Sydney, was practically the English nominee. Mr. Errington's services were, of course, used to secure this appointment. But the following letter fell into the hands of Mr. William O'Brien, who published it in 'United Ireland' on August 1, 1885:

'House of Commons:
'Monday, May 15 [1885].

'DEAR LORD GRANVILLE,—The Dublin archbishopric being still undecided, I must continue to keep the Vatican in good humour about you, and keep up communication with them generally as much as possible.

'I am almost ashamed to trouble you again when you are so busy, but perhaps on Monday you would allow me to show you the letter I propose to write.

'The premature report about Dr. Moran will cause increased pressure to be put on the Pope, and create many fresh difficulties. The matter must therefore be most carefully watched, so that the strong pressure I can still command may be used at the right moment, and not too soon or unnecessarily (for too much pressure is quite as dangerous as too little). To effect this, constant communication with Rome is necessary.

'I am, dear Lord Granville,
'Faithfully yours,
'G. ERRINGTON.'[1]

The publication of this letter blew the bottom out of the Errington mission, and secured the appointment of Dr. Walsh.

In December 1883 the Parnell tribute was closed. It was decided to give the Irish leader a cheque for the full amount, and to invite him to a banquet

[1] Mr. Errington however, had his reward. He was made a baronet,

at the Rotunda. The Lord Mayor, a man of culture and an eloquent speaker, was—so runs the story—deputed, with some other leading citizens, to wait on Parnell at Morrison's Hotel and to hand him the cheque. His lordship naturally prepared a few suitable observations for the occasion. At the appointed hour the deputation arrived, and were ushered into a private sitting-room, where stood the Chief. The Lord Mayor having been announced, bowed, and began: 'Mr. Parnell ——.' 'I believe,' said Parnell, 'you have got a cheque for me.' The Lord Mayor, somewhat surprised at this interruption, said 'Yes,' and was about to recommence his speech, when Parnell broke in: 'Is it made payable to order and crossed?' The Lord Mayor again answered in the affirmative, and was resuming the thread of his discourse when Parnell took the cheque, folded it neatly, and put it in his waistcoat pocket. This ended the interview. The whole business was disposed of in five minutes, and there was no speech-making.

On December 11 the banquet took place. There was, it is needless to say, an enthusiastic gathering. Parnell made a speech on the general situation, but said nothing about the cheque.

'I remember,' says Lord Spencer, 'the incident of the Parnell tribute. I hear that when Parnell received the cheque he put it in his pocket and never thanked anybody. Then there was a public meeting. I remember he made a long speech, but never said a word about the cheque. That struck me as a very extraordinary thing and very characteristic. Here is this handsome sum of money collected for him. He does not make the least reference to it, and he gives offence to nobody. That little incident always made an

impression on me, because it showed the immense power of the man.'

I have said that Parnell derived his political ascendency in no small degree from the fact that he walked all the time on the verge of treason-felony. He kept that path still. At no period since the beginning of the agitation was English feeling more incensed against Irish-Americans than during the years 1883 and 1884. The policy of dynamite had been boldly proclaimed by the 'Irish World.' Attempts were made to destroy the offices of the Local Government Board and to blow up London Bridge. Victoria, Paddington, Charing Cross, Ludgate Hill railway stations were marked out for destruction. Scotland Yard was attacked. Dynamite plots and rumours of dynamite plots filled the air. There was an epidemic of outrages.

A dynamite factory was discovered at Birmingham. Batches of dynamitards were seized, and the public investigations which followed proved the American origin of these plots to lay London in ruins. The public mind was disturbed, the Government was alarmed. Special guards of police and soldiers were placed in charge of public buildings, and the streets of London presented the appearance of a town under the sway of some despotic ruler who feared the vengeance of his people.[1] Those who believed in the beneficent influence of the Anglo-Saxon race were enraged and horrified at this state of affairs. Any man who was, even to the slightest extent, under English influence would at this moment have shrunk from contact with

[1] These outrages took place in 1883 and 1884. On January 24, 1885, attempts were made to blow up the Tower, the House of Commons, and Westminster Hall.

the Clan-na-Gael. But Parnell held on his course. English opinion was naught to him. His one thought was to keep Irishmen united. He was prepared to suffer much, to risk much, for this. He did not hesitate in 1883 to proclaim to the world his determination to keep up communication with the American Revolutionists by despatching a cablegram to the Philadelphia convention ; and in 1884 he sent Mr. William Redmond and Mr. Sexton to another convention in Boston. He was cautious and circumspect. He did not desire publicity. But when publicity was necessary he did not shrink from it, let all England denounce him as it might.

Yet his relations with the Clan-na-Gael were not cordial. In sympathy with the rebellious spirit of the brotherhood, he looked upon the dynamite policy as sheer insanity. It was, besides, unfair to him and his parliamentary colleagues. Men in Chicago might easily hatch plots for the destruction of London, but they had not to run the gauntlet of the English House of Commons. Some consideration ought to be shown to those who had to carry on the struggle on this side of the Atlantic. None was shown. He did not conceal his private repugnance to the methods of the American Extremists. He spoke of Ford and Finerty as 'd——d fools.'

The 'Irish World' denounced the parliamentary movement, and opposed the parliamentary party after the Kilmainham treaty. In fact, from about August 1882 until about the middle of 1884, or even later, the 'World' was hostile to Parnell. 'There are no organisers,' it wrote in October 1882, 'going about knitting the people together. There are no orators or teachers sent through the country to educate men. On

the contrary, all agitation has been discontinued, and a quieting down policy is the order of the day. Davitt, Dillon, Egan, Brennan have been wishing and praying for vigorous action, all in vain.' In November 1882 the 'World' wrote: 'We have not as much faith in the wisdom and ability of Mr. Parnell as we once had.'

If the Clan could have fitted out a fleet of torpedo boats to blow up the British fleet Parnell would have offered no objection. That would have been war. But a conspiracy to damage the British empire by abortive dynamite explosions in the streets of London was the conception of lunatics.

He would sometimes smile grimly at the grotesqueness of these plots, occasionally hatched with utter indifference even to the lives of the Nationalist members themselves. Had the attempt to destroy the Charing Cross Railway Station been successful, a score of Irish members who were stopping at the Charing Cross Hotel would have been blown into eternity. It transpired at the trial of some of the dynamitards that a proposal had been made to throw a bomb into the House of Commons. 'I entered the House of Commons about this time,' said Mr. Harrington. 'I remember being in the Smoking-room one evening with Parnell and Lord Randolph Churchill. "Well, Parnell," said Lord Randolph Churchill, referring to the dynamite trials, "I suppose you would object to have a bomb thrown into the House of Commons. You would not like to be blown up, even by an Irishman." "I am not so sure of that," said Parnell, "if there were a call of the House."'

'Mr. Parnell,' asked the Attorney-General at the Parnell Commission, 'you know that Daly [a convicted

dynamitard] at all events was tried for being a dynamitard?' 'Yes,' answered Parnell, 'he was tried and convicted of having bombs in his pocket which, it was suggested, were going to be thrown on the floor of the House of Commons, which would probably have had an equal effect all round.'

But what did Parnell think of the morality of dynamite? He did not think about it at all. He regarded the moral sermons preached by English statesmen and publicists as the merest cant, and looked upon the 'Times' ' denunciations of the 'Irish World' as a case of the pot calling the kettle black. Morality was the last thing the English thought of in their dealings with Ireland. Morality was the last thing he thought of in his dealings with them. There are men who can readily argue themselves into the belief that whatever serves their purpose is moral. Such men could easily explain away the dynamite outrages to their own satisfaction. But Parnell's mind was too simple to indulge in the subtleties and refinements necessary for this achievement. He was content to call the dynamitards fools, and to laugh at the moral pretensions of the House of Commons. For the rest, he concentrated all his energies upon the main purpose of bringing the British statesmen to their bearings on the question of Ireland. He had no faith in an English party. He advised his fellow-countrymen to trust in none. Speaking at the St. Patrick's Day celebration in London in 1884, he said: 'I have always endeavoured to teach my countrymen, whether at home or abroad, the lesson of self-reliance. I do not depend upon any English political party. I should advise you not to depend upon any such party. I do not depend upon the good wishes of any section of the

English. Some people desire to rely on the English democracy—they look for a great future movement among the English democracy; but I have never known any important section of any country which has assumed the government of another country to awaken to the real necessities of the position until compelled to do so. Therefore I say, do not rely upon any English party; do not rely even upon the great English democracy, however well disposed they may be towards your claims; but rely upon yourselves, upon the great power which you have in every industrial centre in England and Scotland, upon the devotion of the sea-divided Gael, whether it be under the southern cross or beyond the wide Atlantic; but, above all, rely upon the devotion and determination of our people on the old sod at home.'

In the struggle which was now imminent we shall see him playing off one English party against the other, and out-manœuvring both.

CHAPTER XVI

WOOING PARNELL

I HAVE given one instance—the Monaghan election—of how quickly Parnell, though 'submerged' during the years 1883 and 1884, could come to the surface when his presence was necessary. I shall give another. We have seen that in 1882 Davitt wished to make Land Nationalisation a plank in the National League platform, and that Parnell would not allow it. Davitt still adhered to his views, and, not unfairly, endeavoured in private and public to enforce them. Parnell—shrinking from public controversy with a colleague, yet fearing that perhaps even a small section of the people might accept the principle of Land Nationalisation and that a division would thus be caused in the Nationalist ranks—felt himself constrained to make a public declaration on the subject. Speaking at Drogheda on April 15, 1884, he said: 'It is necessary for me to take advantage of this occasion to warn you against elements of future difficulty—elements of possible future difficulty, and possibilities of grave disunion in our ranks, which may be obviated by a timely declaration. I refer to the project termed the nationalisation of the land, and in dealing with this question I don't wish to

intrude upon you anything of a personal character. I prefer, as I always have done in public life, to deal with principles, and not with men. I have shown you two planks of the platform of the Land League—the destruction of rack-rents and of landlord oppression and evictions, and the facilitation of occupying ownership by the tiller of the soil. Well, unmindful of this fact, we have been recently informed upon distinguished authority, at a meeting in Dublin, that we have been false to the spirit of the Land League, that we are unmindful of its principles, because we refused to desert that which has been our programme up to the present moment and follow this new craze. Ownership of land by anybody, we are told, is theft. Whether that anybody be landlord or tenant, it is equally a crime and a robbery, and because we refuse to agree with the sweeping assertion we are condemned as slack and as yielding basely to the present Coercion Act. The desire to acquire land is everywhere one of the strongest instincts of human nature, and never more developed than in a country such as Ireland, where land is limited and those who desire to acquire it are numerous. I submit further, that this desire to acquire landed property, and the further desire to be released from the crushing impositions of rack-rents, was the very basis and foundation of the National Land League, and that without it, although not solely owing to it, we never could have progressed or been successful. As reasonably might we have supposed that we could have persuaded the poor man that it was with him a crime to endeavour to hope for the ownership of the holding he tilled. No more absurd or preposterous proposition was ever made to a people than, after having declared on a thousand platforms by a million voices that the

tenant should be the owner of his holding—that after this declaration had been agreed to by a million of our own countrymen in England, America, and Australia—after having, with unexampled success, proceeded forward on these lines for five years, we should quietly turn round, retrace our steps to the starting-post, and commence anew a movement which should be wanting in every element and prospect of success. . . . I have neither advanced nor receded from the position which I took up in 1879. It was a position which I thought you would be able to carry, and which in all probability you will be able to carry. . . . I said in New York, in 1879, when I landed there, what I say to you to-night—that you must either pay for the land or fight for it. . . . Constitutional agitation and organisation can do a great deal to whittle down the price that the landlord asks for his land, but it must be paid unless you adopt the other alternative which I say nothing about. We are told of some great wave of English democracy which is coming over here to poor Ireland to assist the Irish democracy. The poor Irish democracy will have, I fear, to rely upon themselves in the future as they have had to do up to the present moment. The land question of Ireland must be settled by the Irish people at home.'

This speech disposed of the question of Land Nationalisation. Davitt still held his own views, but he despaired of gaining any adherents in Ireland, and soon afterwards went on a tour to Egypt.

Towards the end of 1884 there was much discussion in Nationalist circles about the 'inactivity' of Parnell. 'Do you think,' a Nationalist said to me in December, 'that Parnell is tired of the whole business and that he means to chuck it up?' I ventured to remind my

friend of the Monaghan election and of the Drogheda speech, and suggested that Parnell would probably always appear upon the scene when he thought his presence was necessary; that he would not be forced into activity by the abuse of the 'Irish World,' any more than he would be forced into inactivity by the abuse of the 'Times.' He would always take his own line at his own time, and disregard the critics. A fortnight after this conversation Parnell was again in evidence. An election was pending in the County Tipperary. His nominee was Mr. John O'Connor, of Cork. A local convention nominated a local candidate, Mr. O'Ryan. Here was a new danger. A fight between two Home Rule candidates would certainly give the enemy an opportunity to blaspheme. English publicists looked at the situation with joy, Irish Nationalists with alarm. What was to be done? How was this fresh peril to be averted? One day Parnell arrived suddenly in the town of Thurles. Next day the danger had passed. Mr. O'Ryan had retired. Mr. O'Connor was accepted with acclamation. On January 8, 1885, Parnell addressed a meeting in Thurles. He said: 'When I went to Meath I was told that I was not a Meath man, but I was not told so by Nationalists. I was told so by landlords. When I went to Cork, no one there said that I was not a Cork man. The question is not whether you belong to this county or to that, but whether you are a good Irishman. Mr. O'Ryan has proved himself a good Irishman by the handsome way in which he has retired from this contest; and I will answer for it that Mr. O'Connor will prove himself a good Irishman if he is returned for Tipperary.'

He was returned for Tipperary without opposition.

The General Election was now approaching, and Parnell girded up his loins for the struggle. The election was fought under new conditions. In December 1884 a new Reform Act, establishing household suffrage in Ireland, became law. The result, contrary to the expectations of Ministers, was to strengthen the position of Parnell. The Irish electorate was increased from about 200,000 to about 700,000 voters, and the new voters were almost all Home Rulers. Ministers were 'hoisted with their own petard.' They believed that the new Franchise Act would make Ireland Liberal. In truth it effaced the Liberals.

For two years Parnell had kept quiet, flashing only now and then like a meteor across the political firmament, and again disappearing. Now he burst forth once more in a blaze of activity, and filled the world with his name. 'When,' he said, speaking of his tactics between May 1882 and January 1883, 'when courage was required when it was necessary for the interests of the nation, I have shown it; and when moderation was necessary and temperate judgment for the interests of the nation, I had the courage to show it too.'

He now made a short journey through the country, speaking at Clonmel (where the freedom of the city was presented to him) and at Bansha on January 9, and at Arklow on January 11. On January 21 he sounded the tocsin of war at Cork, in a speech which cheered the heart of every Nationalist in the country. He said: 'We cannot ask for less than the restitution of Grattan's Parliament, with its important privileges and wide, far-reaching constitution. We cannot, under the British constitution, ask for more than the restitution of Grattan's Parliament. But no man has a right to fix the boundary of the march of a nation. No man has a right to

say, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no further"; and we have never attempted to fix the *ne plus ultra* to the progress of Ireland's nationalhood, and we never shall.'

On January 23 he delivered a lecture before the Cork 'Young Ireland Society' on Ireland and her Parliament. Mr. Horgan has given me the following reminiscence of this lecture:

'Parnell always stopped at my house in Cork. He was very pleasant in a house; quiet, and ready to put up with anything. He stayed with me in January 1885. The Young Ireland Society asked him to deliver a lecture on Irish history. He consented. Afterwards he said to me, "I really do not know anything about Irish history. Have you got any books I can read?" I knew as little about Irish history as he did, but I fished out some books for him. The day of the lecture came. The hour fixed was 8 P.M. We dined a little earlier than usual. Dinner was over at a quarter to eight. "Now," said Parnell, rising from the table, "I must read up the history. Will you give me a pen and ink, and some note-paper?" I put him into a room by himself, with pen, ink, and paper, and the books. I came back about a quarter to nine. He looked up smiling and said: "I'm ready!" He had made notes in big handwriting on the paper; about three notes on each sheet. "I think I will be able to say something now," he said. We then drove off to the rooms of the society. The streets were crowded, the rooms were crowded. We were an hour and a quarter late. When Parnell showed himself he received a magnificent reception. When he ascended the platform they cheered him again and again. What a king he looked, standing on that platform that night;

so handsome, so quiet, so self-possessed, so dignified. People thought of looking at no one but him. He dwarfed all around him. There was a majesty about the man which fascinated and awed you. I felt horribly nervous for him. I knew how he had got up the lecture, and I feared he would break down. I felt so anxious that I really did not follow the lecture at all. But I heard the cheers, and they cheered from beginning to end.

'Coming home he was as simple and as proud as a child of the whole performance. "I think," he said, "I got through very well." He did not seem to have the faintest notion that people looked up to him, not only as the greatest man in Ireland, but one of the most remarkable men in Europe. He spoke like a young man making his *début* at a debating society. I can see him now walking upstairs to bed with the candle in his hand, and stepping so quietly and lightly so as to disturb no one. He was like a young fellow who has come home late and was afraid to wake "the governor." Yet, with all his self-depreciation, modesty, and gentleness, you always felt that you were in the presence of a master. You dare not presume on his familiarity when he chose to be familiar. Without any effort whatever upon his part you always felt the overpowering influence of his extraordinary personality.'

From Cork Parnell went on January 25 to Ennis. On the 26th he addressed a meeting at Milltown Malbay. In February he was once more in London attending to his parliamentary duties.

On March 17 he presided at the St. Patrick's Day banquet, and again laid down the principle on which the struggle should be carried on. 'England,' he

said, 'will respect you in proportion as you respect yourselves. Englishmen will not give anything to Ireland out of justice or righteousness. They will concede your liberties when they must, and no sooner.'

In April the Prince and Princess of Wales visited Ireland. Some Nationalists thought that the occasion should be used to demonstrate against the Government. Parnell did not hold this view. He was of opinion that the royal visitors should be allowed to pass through the country like ordinary visitors; that there should be no demonstrations one way or the other. On April 11 he wrote to 'United Ireland':

Letter to 'United Ireland'

'You ask for my views regarding the visit of the Prince of Wales. In reply I desire to say that if the usages of the constitution existed in Ireland as they do in England there would, to my judgment, be no inconsistency in those who believe in the limited monarchy as the best form of government taking a suitable part in the reception of the Prince. But in view of the fact that the constitution has never been administered in Ireland according to its spirit and precedents, that the power of the Crown as wielded by Earl Spencer and other Viceroys is despotic and unlimited to the last degree, and that in the present instance the royal personage is to be used by the two English political parties in Ireland for the purpose of injuring and insulting the Irish Nationalist party, and of impeding if possible their work, I fail to see upon what ground it can be claimed from any lover of constitutional government under a limited monarchy that the Prince is entitled to a

reception from the independent and patriotic people of Ireland, or to any recognition, save from the garrison of officials, and landowners, and place-hunters who fatten upon the poverty and misfortunes of the country. Let me suggest a parallel. Would it be tolerated in England for a moment if the Government for their own party purposes, on the eve of a general election, were to use the Prince of Wales as an electioneering agent in any section of the country, and were to send him upon a royal progress in order to embarrass their political opponents? The breach of constitutional privilege becomes still graver when we consider that it is the march of a nation which is now sought to be impeded—the fruition of a long struggle and of many sacrifices which the adventitious aid of this royal visit is enlisted to injure. I have, however, every confidence that our people, having been suitably forewarned, will not allow their hospitable nature and cordial disposition to carry them into any attitude which might be taken as one of condonation for the past, or satisfaction with the present state of affairs.

'CHARLES S. PARNELL.'

Parnell's advice to receive the royal visitors with courtesy and reserve was not taken. There were hostile demonstrations in the south. In some districts black flags were hung along the line of route and the inscription was shown: 'We will have no Prince but Charlie.' English people were relieved, says the 'Annual Register,' when the Prince returned.

On the eve of the General Election of 1885 Ireland was boiling with sedition. Lord Spencer, like Mr. Forster, was tarred with the coercion brush. Wherever

he went throughout the south and west he was received with manifestations of disloyalty. From the hour of his landing to the hour of his departure 'United Ireland,' expressing popular opinion, never ceased to denounce him in language of unmeasured vituperation.

His excursions through the streets of Dublin surrounded by a military escort suggested rather the presence of an arbitrary despot than the rule of a constitutional Viceroy. The people sought his overthrow and the overthrow of the Minister who sent him with a singleness of purpose and a tenacity of will which for the moment dwarfed almost every popular grievance and obscured every popular aspiration. 'Remember Coercion! Down with Gladstone!' was the war-cry of the day.

Parnell was unmoved by the passions which swayed the multitude. He surveyed the situation with his usual calmness, and with his usual clearness of vision. Mr. Gladstone's Government was doomed. That much was evident. He had the power to destroy it, and he would destroy it. But what then?

In opening the campaign of 1885 Parnell fixed his eyes on three men in public life—Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr. Chamberlain, and Mr. Gladstone. As we have seen, he had no faith in English parties. He believed that neither Whigs nor Tories would do anything for Ireland because of righteousness. Office was the goal of every English politician. It was for him to see that no English politician should reach it except through the open ranks of the Irish parliamentary party. The new Reform Act would enable him to command a following of eighty or ninety members. With this force, well disciplined, he would be master of the situation. It was said that he ought to address

public meetings in England. He laughed contemptuously at the suggestion. He would concentrate all his efforts to bring English statesmen to his feet. Then he would let them convert the English people. That was his plan of operation.

Parnell liked few men; above all, he liked few Englishmen. Yet he regarded Lord Randolph Churchill with no unfriendly feelings. He thought that the young Tory Democrat possessed generous instincts, entertained kindly feelings towards the Irish, and was full of originality, resource, and courage. A pleasant companion, frank, witty, joyous, with a dash of fun and mischief, there was no English member with whom Parnell would rather spend an hour in the Smoking-room of the House of Commons than this Radical who was born a Tory. But would Lord Randolph take up Home Rule? Well, Parnell was of opinion that he was as likely to take it up as any other Englishman, and (at the worst) for the same reason—to get into office; at his best, however, Parnell believed that Lord Randolph was more likely to be genuinely touched by the Irish case than any of his compatriots. He also had a shrewd suspicion that there was nothing which this rattling young Tory would relish more keenly than 'dishing' the Whigs—except, perhaps, 'dishing' the Tories. But if he were drawn towards Home Rule, would he bring the Tory party with him? Of this Parnell had grave doubts. Yet he was satisfied that with Lord Randolph's help he could at least create a diversion on the Tory side which would fill the Liberals with alarm and force them forward in his direction.

Politically, Parnell held the member for Birmingham in high esteem. They had combined to throw over

Mr. Forster. Would they combine to carry Home Rule? No member of the Cabinet was more advanced on Irish questions than the Radical leader. He had prepared a scheme of self-government which gave the Irish everything but a Parliament. He had always considered, and even at times consulted, the Irish party on Irish subjects. He kept in touch with the Nationalists when his colleagues in the Cabinet shunned them as pariahs. He disbelieved in the policy of coercion. He was fully in sympathy with a policy of redress and reform. Assuredly, if there were any English politician with whom Parnell might be expected to cultivate cordial relations, it was with Mr. Chamberlain. Yet as the crisis approached he kept the member for Birmingham at arm's length.

Mr. Healy and Mr. Chamberlain saw a good deal of each other in those days. On one occasion Mr. Chamberlain asked Mr. Healy to dine with him in order to have a talk about Ireland. Mr. Healy asked Parnell's permission. Parnell said, 'No,' angrily, and showed very clearly that he did not desire the continuance of friendly relations between the two men. In fact, Parnell seems to have made up his mind that Mr. Chamberlain would go to the verge of Home Rule and stop there. He would make the running for Mr. Gladstone. He could be relied on to that extent, but no more.

Mr. Gladstone remained. Parnell had no love for Mr. Gladstone. But he regarded every person in public life in England as an intellectual pigmy compared to the Grand Old Man. 'Ah,' he once said to me in the Smoking-room of the House of Commons, 'you do not know what it is to fight Mr. Gladstone. I am no match for him.' I said: 'Don't you think you under-

estimate your powers?' He answered: 'No; I could not explain to you what a strain it is to have to fight him. I know it. I have fought him, and am ready to fight him again; but he knows more moves on the board than I do.' He then paused; an Irish member entered from the Terrace. Parnell, shaking the ashes from a cigar, looked at him, adding quickly, with an arch smile, 'But *he* thinks he is a match for Mr. Gladstone.'

Man for man, Parnell would rather have Mr. Gladstone on his side than anyone in England. Party for party, he preferred the Tories to the Liberals. 'The Tories,' he said, 'can carry a Home Rule Bill through the Lords. Can the Liberals?' Hoping to convert the Tories, he believed nevertheless that Mr. Gladstone would in the end outstrip all competitors in the race for the Irish vote. The greatest parliamentary tactician of the age, the chances were he would out-manœuvre every antagonist. He might even out-manœuvre Parnell himself. Still the course of the Irish leader was perfectly clear. He had to threaten Mr. Chamberlain with Lord Randolph Churchill, and Mr. Gladstone with both, letting the whole world know meanwhile that his weight would ultimately be thrown into the scale which went down upon the side of Ireland. His first move was against the Government. He wished to make the Liberals feel the power of the Irish vote. That could be done by beating them with the Irish vote.

On May 15 Mr. Gladstone announced the determination of the Cabinet to renew the Crimes Act.[1] The

[1] Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet had decided, according to the account given by the Prime Minister, 'with the Queen's permission,' to abandon the coercion clauses of the Act, but to invest the Viceroy by statute with power to enforce, wherever and whenever necessary, the 'Procedure

Bill was to be introduced on June 10. Parnell bided his time, watching his opportunity. On June 8 the second reading of the Budget Bill was moved by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach moved an amendment condemning the increase of beer and spirit duties proposed by Ministers. The House divided on the question. The Irish vote was cast upon the side of the Tories, and the Government were defeated by a majority of 14. When the figures, 264—252, were handed in, a wild cheer of triumph and vengeance, mingled with cries of 'Remember coercion,' broke from the Irish benches. Parnell had shot his bolt and brought down his man. Mr. Gladstone resigned immediately, and before the end of the month the Tories were in office. Lord Salisbury was Prime Minister, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Randolph Churchill Secretary of State for India, and the Earl of Carnarvon Viceroy of Ireland. The effect of this *coup de main* on Liberal opinion has been described by Mr. Morley: 'A second point that cannot escape attention in this crisis is the peremptory dissipation of favourite illusions as to the Irish vote "not counting." The notion that the two English parties should establish an agreement that if either of them should chance to be beaten by a majority due to Irish auxiliaries the victors should act as if they had lost the division has been cherished by some who are not exactly simpletons in politics. We now see what such a notion is worth. It has proved to be worth just as much as might have been expected by any onlooker who knows the players, the fierceness of the

clauses' which related to changes of *venue*, Special juries, Boycotting. Ministers proposed, in fact, to dispense with the name and maintain the reality of coercion.—Jeyes, *The Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain*, p. 148.

game, and the irresistible glitter of the prizes. When it suits their own purpose the two English parties will unite to baffle or to crush the Irish, but neither of them will ever scruple to use the Irish in order to baffle or to crush their own rivals. This fancy must be banished to the same limbo as the similar dream that Ireland could be disfranchised and reduced to the rank of a Crown colony. Three years ago, when Ireland was violently disturbed and the Irish members were extremely troublesome, this fine project of governing Ireland like India was a favourite consolation even to some Liberals who might have been expected to know better. The absurdity of the design and the shallowness of those who were captivated by it were swiftly exposed. A few months after they had been consoling themselves with the idea of taking away the franchise from Ireland they all voted for a measure which extended the franchise to several hundreds of thousands of the inhabitants of Ireland who had not possessed it before, and who are not at all likely to employ their new power in the direction of Crown colonies, or martial law, or any of the other random panaceas of thoughtless, incontinent politicians. As for the new Government, sharp critics—and some of the sharpest are to be found on their own benches—do not shrink from declaring that they come into power as Mr. Parnell's lieutenants. His vote has installed, it can displace them; it has its price, and the price will be paid. In the whole transaction the Irish not only count, they almost count for everything.'

Parnell scored heavily by his first move. He put the Liberals out, and the Tories in ; punished the one party, and made the other dependent on his will. It was check for Lord Salisbury, and checkmate for Mr.

Gladstone. That was the state of the game in July 1885.

Kept in office by Parnell, the Tories did not of course attempt to renew the Crimes Act. They were more Liberal than the Liberals themselves; and Lord Carnarvon, in a gracious speech, expressed his determination to rule by the ordinary law. Parnell asked for an inquiry into the trials of the Maamtrasna murderers. It was granted. Sir William Harcourt denounced the action of the Executive in reopening the subject as a reflection both upon the Government of Lord Spencer and upon the administration of justice in Ireland. Lord Randolph Churchill scoffed at Sir William's qualms, repudiated all responsibility for the Government of Lord Spencer, and condemned the Liberal policy of coercion. The Tory Press was shocked. 'We admit,' said the 'Standard,' 'the force of the temptation to conciliate Mr. Parnell. We do not at all dispute the probability that the simple expedient adopted will succeed. But that, in our opinion, is not enough to justify the tactics that have been employed.'

'It was not Lord Spencer alone whose good faith has been impeached,' said the 'Times,' 'but the Irish judiciary, the law officers of the Crown, the public prosecutor, the magistracy, and the police.'

The following extracts will give the reader some notion of the efforts which were made by the Tory leaders to 'conciliate' Parnell.

Lord Randolph Churchill. 'Undoubtedly we do intend to inaugurate a change of policy in Ireland. . . . The policy of the late Government so exasperated Irishmen—maddened and irritated that imaginative and warm-hearted race—that I firmly believe that had the late Government remained in office no amount of

bayonets or military would have prevented outbreaks in Ireland.'

Lord Carnarvon. 'I believe for my own part that special legislation of this (coercion) sort is inexpedient. It is inexpedient while it is in operation, and it is still more inexpedient when it has to be renewed at short intervals.'

Lord Salisbury. 'The effect of the Crimes Act has been very much exaggerated. While it was in existence there grew up a thousand branches of the National League, and it is from them that those difficulties proceeded with which we have now to contend. The provisions in the Crimes Act against boycotting were of very small effect. It grew up under that Act because it is a crime which legislation has very great difficulty in reaching. I have seen it stated that the Crimes Act diminished outrages; that boycotting acted through outrages; and that the Crimes Act diminished boycotting. . . . It is not true; the Act did not diminish outrages. In September without the Crimes Act there were fewer outrages than in August with that Act. . . . The truth about boycotting is that it depends upon the passing humour of the population. I do not believe that in any community it has endured. I doubt whether in any community law has been able to provide a satisfactory remedy; but I believe it contains its own Nemesis.'

Parnell set his heart on a new Land Bill to facilitate the creation of a tenant proprietary. Such a Bill was passed. Lord Ashbourne's Act took its place on the statute-book. By this measure the State was empowered to advance a part or the whole of the purchase money to tenants who had agreed with their landlords to purchase their holdings. Forty-nine years were allowed

for repayment of the purchase money, at the rate of 4 per cent., and 5,000,000*l.* were taken from the surplus fund of the Irish Disestablished Church and set aside for the purposes of the Act. But the most remarkable development of the Tory Irish 'alliance' has yet to be unfolded.

In the summer of 1885 Lord Carnarvon invited Parnell to meet him to discuss the affairs of Ireland. Mr. Justin McCarthy shall begin this story:

'Some time in the summer of 1885 Howard Vincent came to me in the House of Commons and said that Lord Carnarvon wished to have a talk with Parnell about Ireland. Vincent asked if an interview could be arranged. I said that Parnell was a difficult man to see, and that I doubted if it could be arranged.

'Vincent said that the interview could take place at his house, and that everything would be managed very quietly; he would keep all the servants out of the way, and open the door himself. I promised to see Parnell and to put the matter before him. I did see Parnell, and I told him all that Howard Vincent had said. Parnell replied: "I will see Lord Carnarvon at his own house if he wishes to see me. There must be no mystery." I told this to Vincent, and it was finally settled that I should see Lord Carnarvon first. I called on Lord Carnarvon at his own house. He opened the conversation, saying he wished to talk about Ireland and to hear Parnell's views. He asked me if there were any suggestions about the government of the country which I would like to make. I said: "The first suggestion, Lord Carnarvon, I would like to offer is that you should go about without a military escort and without detectives. Trust the people."

'He answered: "I have made up my mind on that

point already. I mean to trust the people." Next he said that he was in favour of Home Rule.'

I asked: 'Are you sure he said Home Rule?'

McCarthy. 'Yes, he did.'

'Did he give any sort of explanation as to what he meant by Home Rule?'

McCarthy. 'Yes, he said some such arrangement as existed in the English colonies. He did not conceal that he would have some difficulty with his colleagues in the Cabinet, but he made no secret that he was himself in favour of Home Rule. I said that Parnell was willing to see him in his own house. He replied that they could meet at his sister's house in Grosvenor Square. The house was not, I believe, at that time occupied. The carpets were up. That was the reason, I suppose, that Parnell said afterwards that the meeting took place in an empty house. I saw Parnell immediately, and told him what had taken place between Carnarvon and myself.

'A few days later Parnell and Carnarvon met at the house in Grosvenor Square. They were quite alone. Parnell never gave me an account of the interview. He often had interviews which he kept to himself. Subsequently—it might be some months later—Carnarvon wrote to a lady, a mutual friend, saying that he was going to Hatfield to see Lord Salisbury, and that if he should happen to see me, to say that he would like to have a talk with me. This lady invited me to dinner to meet Lord Carnarvon; the only persons present were the lady and her husband, and Lord Carnarvon and myself. After dinner the lady and her husband took some opportunity of retiring from the room, and Carnarvon and I were left alone. He at once called my attention to an interview which Parnell had just given

to an American newspaper. In this interview Parnell was reported to have said that he expected more from Mr. Gladstone than he did from the Tories. "If this newspaper report be true," said Lord Carnarvon, "there is no use in our going on." That was his expression, or something like it, as well as I can recollect. I unfortunately had not seen this report. I knew nothing about it. I could not give any explanation. I could not say anything.[1]

'Carnarvon added something to the effect that if Parnell looked to Mr. Gladstone to settle the question of Home Rule it was idle for him to discuss the subject further.

'That was substantially what happened at this interview. I had always a high opinion of Lord Carnarvon. I feel satisfied he was willing to give us Home Rule, but how far he could carry the Cabinet with him, of course, I do not know. It is possible that Carnarvon was honestly thinking of Home Rule, while the Cabinet were thinking of the General Election.'

Lord Carnarvon's account of the transaction may now be given:

'Towards the end of last July it was intimated to me that, if I were willing, Mr. Parnell would also be willing to meet me in conversation. . . . At that moment there was no one who could precisely say what the wishes and the desires of the Irish parliamentary party were. There had been singular reticence on their part, and it was impossible really to know what their views and opinions were.

'There was only one man who was in any way qualified to speak. He was the chosen leader of the

[1] This was an interview with a reporter of the *New York Herald* in October.

Irish parliamentary party, and his power was singularly and exceptionally large. He stood at the head of the parliamentary body, who have proved their strength by virtually controlling the business of the House of Commons. It was notorious that when the new Parliament should be elected his strength would be at least doubled. When I, therefore, received such an intimation I felt that, on my part at least, I had no option in the matter. It seemed to me to be my duty to make myself acquainted with what Mr. Parnell's views and opinions were. . . .

'I endeavoured to make myself explicit to Mr. Parnell. I explained that the three conditions upon which I could enter into conversation with him were:

'First of all, that I was acting for myself by myself, that all the responsibility was mine, and that the communications were from me alone—that is, from my lips alone.

'Secondly, that that conversation was with reference to information only, and that it must be understood that there was no agreement or understanding, however shadowy, between us.

'And, thirdly, that I was there as the Queen's servant, and that I would neither hear nor say one word that was inconsistent with the union of the two countries.

'To these conditions Mr. Parnell consented, and I had the advantage of hearing from him his general opinions and views on Irish matters. This really is the whole case. Mr. Parnell was quite frank and straightforward in all he said. I, on the other hand, had absolutely nothing to conceal, and everything I said I shall be perfectly contented to be judged by. Both of us left the room as free as when we entered it. It was the

first, the last, and the only time that I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Parnell.'[1]

Parnell's statement comes next:

'Lord Carnarvon originally proposed that I should meet him at the house of a gentleman (a member of Parliament[2]) who subsequently undertook a mission to Ireland, and obtained letters of introduction to several leading members of the Irish parliamentary party, with whom he discussed in detail the species of an Irish Parliament which would be acceptable to Ireland. I declined, however, to meet Lord Carnarvon at the house of a stranger, and suggested that if the interview were to take place at all it had best be at his own residence. I must take issue with the correctness of Lord Carnarvon's memory as to two of the three conditions which he alleges he stated to me, as the conditions upon which he could enter into any conversation with me—namely, that first of all he was acting of himself, by himself, and that the responsibility was his, and the communications were from him alone; and secondly, that he was there as the Queen's servant, and that he would neither hear nor say one word that was inconsistent with the union of the two countries, and that I consented to these conditions. Now, Lord Carnarvon did not lay down any conditions whatever as a preliminary to his entering into conversation with me. It must be manifest that if he desired to do so he would have intimated them when requesting the interview. He certainly made no use whatever of the two terms of the two conditions which I have repeated. There is, however, some foundation for his statement concerning the remaining one, inasmuch as he undoubtedly re-

[1] House of Lords, June 10, 1885.
[2] Sir Howard Vincent.

marked at the commencement of our conversation that he hoped I would understand that we were not engaged in making any treaty or bargain whatever. Lord Carnarvon then proceeded to say that he had sought this interview for the purpose of ascertaining my views regarding, should he call it, a "Constitution for Ireland." But I soon found that he had brought me there in order that he might give his own views upon this matter as well as ascertaining mine. I readily opened my mind to him on the subject, and in reply to an inquiry as to a proposal which had been made to build up a central legislative body on the foundation of county boards, I told him that I thought that this would be working in a wrong direction, and would not be accepted as a settlement by Ireland; that the central legislative body should be a Parliament in name and in fact, that it should be left to the consideration of whatever system of local government for the counties might be found necessary. Lord Carnarvon then assured me that that was his own view also; that he strongly appreciated the importance of giving due weight to the sentiments of the Irish in this matter. He then inquired whether in my judgment some plan of constituting a Parliament in Dublin short of Repeal of the Union might not be devised and prove acceptable to Ireland; and he made certain suggestions to this end, taking the colonial model as a basis, which struck me as being the result of much thought and knowledge of the subject. Then came the reference to protection. We were discussing the general outline of a plan for constituting a Legislature for Ireland on the colonial model, when I took occasion to remark that protection for certain Irish industries against English and foreign competition

would be absolutely necessary; upon which Lord Carnarvon said: "I entirely agree with you, but what a row there will be about it in England."

'At the conclusion of the conversation—which lasted more than an hour, and to which Lord Carnarvon was very much the larger contributor—I left him, believing that I was in complete accord with him regarding the main outlines of a settlement conferring a Legislature upon Ireland. In conversing with him I dealt with the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, who was responsible for the government of the country. I could not suppose that he would fail to impress the views which he had disclosed to me upon the Cabinet, and I have reason to believe that he did so impress them, and that they were strongly shared by more than one important member of the body, and strongly opposed by none.'[1]

But the most interesting communication which I have received on this subject is from the pen of Sir Charles Gavan Duffy.

[1] Communicated to the Central News Agency, June 12, 1886.

CHAPTER XVII

THE CARNARVON CONTROVERSY

By Sir Charles Gavan Duffy

I ASSENT, my dear O'Brien, to your request that I should write the story of Lord Carnarvon's pourparler with Mr. Parnell and other Nationalists in 1885, chiefly because I think that Lord Carnarvon has never had fair play in that transaction either from friends or enemies. He was misrepresented not so much from malice as from sheer misconception, for he was a type of man with whom his critics were not familiar. To the cynical nothing seems simpler than the case: a leading member of a Government much in need of votes conferred with the leader of a numerous parliamentary party on a measure which they greatly desired, and with which he expressed substantial sympathy; but at a period when their votes happened to be no longer necessary the Government separated themselves peremptorily from the Minister who had conducted the parley, and of course he could effect nothing without them. To men, however, acquainted with Lord Carnarvon's strict and sensitive code of honour, to which he had more than once sacrificed office, the implied hypothesis was unacceptable, but they confessed it was unfortunate that his sympathy with Irish autonomy

should coincide so strictly with the necessities of his own party. The reader who follows this narrative to the end will acknowledge that the coincidence was purely accidental. Lord Carnarvon had been long of opinion that among the unsettled problems which disturb the peace and security of the Empire the discontent of Ireland was the most dangerous, and that a statesman could attempt no higher task than to abate or suppress it. He did not take up the Irish problem on a sudden party emergency, but, as we shall presently see, acting on a long held and well-weighed conviction that its solution by some just and reasonable method was vital to the public peace and security of the Empire. I undertake to tell the story because I know more of it than most men, perhaps than any man, and I desire and design to speak the naked truth, which just men have no need to fear.

When I returned from Australia to Europe in the spring of 1880 I made Mr. Parnell's acquaintance. He was then a tall, stately-looking young man of reserved manners, who spoke little, but the little was always to the purpose. He questioned me as to my political intentions, and I told him I came home to work for Ireland, but not in Parliament. I hoped to write certain books, and a career in the House of Commons was hard to reconcile with any serious literary enterprise. Outside of Parliament I should consider myself free to take whatever course seemed best to me on public questions without giving anyone a right to complain, for I would connect myself with no party. He renewed the subject once or twice, but this was always the substance of my reply.

During the five stormy years that followed I resided chiefly on the Continent, and watched his career from

a distance. On my annual visits to London I saw him occasionally at a dinner-table or under the gallery in the House of Commons, and our conversation on these occasions generally consisted of my criticism on his policy or that of his supporters in Ireland, which he bore with consummate good humour. I thought they might have done more to suppress outrages and abate endless turbulence, and I insisted that talking of obtaining the land for the people at 'prairie value' was misleading and must end in disastrous disappointment. The Irish movement was one in favour of as just a cause as ever man advocated, but it was not only often reckless in its violence, but, as I was persuaded, hide-bound by want of knowledge and experience. Mr. Parnell was entirely unfamiliar with the studies and experiments which had brought a new soul into Ireland nearly half a century before. He belonged to a family which had reared Thomas Parnell, the author of 'The Hermit,' but he was so little sympathetic with that ancestry that one of his friends told me he seriously asked him what was the use of poetry? His friend told him, I trust, that one of its most practical uses was to kindle patriotism, to feed it with Divine nourishment, and to re-kindle it after every defeat. The 'new movement,' as it was named, made conflicting impressions upon me. I could not fail to see that Mr. Parnell possessed one gift in perfection—the great and rare gift of dominating and controlling men. I had had much experience of Irish parties at home and abroad, and I had seen no one who possessed such mastery of a race among whom individuality is a passion. Grattan did not long control the Parliament which he made independent; O'Connell among men whose position depended altogether on his will was a joyous companion, among the gay loud-

speaking Celts, or at highest a peer among peers; but the proud, silent, isolated attitude of the new dictator was something altogether different. And it increased the marvel of his authority that he possessed none of the gifts by which his predecessors had won popularity. He had not a gleam of the eloquence of Grattan, or the passion and humour of O'Connell, or any trace of the generous forbearance by which Smith O'Brien aimed to efface himself in the interest of his cause, or of Butt's exact knowledge of Irish interests and annals, but he ruled with more unquestioned authority than any of them had done.

But his rule was rudely disturbed by a horrible and unforeseen calamity, the murder of Lord Frederick Cavendish. A howl rose from the English Press against Parnell, to whom the crime was more disastrous than to any man in the community. He was so stricken by the calamity that he resolved to retire from Parliament and public life, and abandon a cause which villains and imbeciles had covered with so much shame. He proffered his resignation to Mr. Gladstone, and announced it to his party, but no one thought that a crime which he detested would justify such a retreat. I may mention, as a circumstance which partly explains the appeal to him I am about presently to describe, that while he was still resolved to retire he recommended his friends to find a substitute by the impossible expedient of inducing me to re-enter Parliament and take his place,[1] and in public and private he alluded gratefully to the creation of Independent Opposition in 1852; and more than once intimated that my relation with that event made him always ready to listen to my friendly counsels.

[1] *Recollections of C. S. Parnell*, by T. M. Healy, M.P.

In the discussions over a new Crimes Bill, which the Government introduced to crush the Phœnix Park conspirators, the friendly relations between the Administration and the Irish party were altogether shattered, and the parliamentary contests between them were fierce and furious. During the same session the Gladstone Government carried the Irish Land Bill of 1881, which has proved a great boon to Ireland. They carried also a Reform Bill, which for the first time gave Ireland the same franchise as England. Strange to say, Mr. Parnell did not vote for the Land Bill (which he probably considered inadequate), and it was only at the last moment, on the eve of the second reading, that he consented to support the Reform Bill. On every division threatening the existence of the Government the Irish party at this time voted with the Opposition, and finally, in June 1885, the Gladstone Government was overthrown by their assistance.

After the fall of Mr. Gladstone's Government Lord Salisbury was called to power, and as he was only supported by an accidental majority a dissolution of Parliament became necessary.

I was in London at this time, and I was profoundly surprised by the intimation from one of Parnell's lieutenants that the Irish party had come to the resolution of supporting Tory candidates at the coming election. At a later period an address was published to the Irish electors in England which confirmed all I had heard. The address was a violent and implacable impeachment of the Liberal party, arraigning them as having coerced Ireland, deluged Egypt with blood, menaced religious liberty in the school, and freedom of speech in Parliament. The Gladstone party, it declared, had attained power

by promises which were all falsified. It promised peace, and made unjust wars; promised economy, and its Budget reached the highest point yet attained; it promised justice to aspiring nationalities, and it mercilessly crushed the national movement in Egypt under Arabi Pasha and murdered thousands of Arabs, 'rightly struggling to be free.' To Ireland, more than any other country, it bound itself by most solemn pledges, and these it flagrantly violated. It denounced coercion, and it practised a system of coercion more brutal than that of any previous Administration. Juries were packed in Ireland with unprecedented shamelessness, and innocent men were hung or sent to the living death of penal servitude; twelve hundred men were robbed of their liberty in Ireland without trial; and for a period every utterance of the popular Press or of the popular platform was as completely suppressed as if Ireland were Poland and the administration of England Russian autocracy. I was much alarmed at the insensate policy about to be pressed upon my countrymen. Parnell was difficult to find, but I called upon Dwyer Gray and told him that I desired very much to have a conference with Parnell on the policy of the hour. Gray promised to arrange a *tête-à-tête* dinner for the ensuing Saturday, which took place at his house accordingly, the party consisting of Parnell, Gray, and myself.

I asked Parnell what he was to get from the Tories for Ireland in return for the support about to be given to them. He said the new Government were not going to renew Forster's Coercion Bill; beyond that he did not know what they meditated. I replied that he ought to know; he was bound before obtaining the support of Irish voters for candidates who in

Ireland would be often Orangemen, and in England often bigots or blockheads. His support was enormously important to the Tory party, and to get nothing in exchange for such a boon was not policy or strategy, but childish folly. What could he get, and how could he get it? he demanded. You might get, I replied, the promise of a Select Committee or a Royal Commission to hear evidence and report on the best means of allaying Irish discontent; the best and only means being, as we knew, Home Rule. As to the method, I reminded him of what happened recently with respect to the late Reform Bills; the leaders of the two parties met in private, and came to a compromise which their supporters accepted without controversy. 'Yes,' he said, 'but an august personage was understood to have recommended that compromise, and he had no august personage to help him.' No, I rejoined, but he had something as decisive; he had the power of turning the Tory minority into a majority. If the new Government promised to consider Home Rule favourably there was probably not a seat in Ireland which they or we could not carry. Gray asked whom was Parnell to approach. The whips were worth nothing in such a case; they had no authority, and might be disavowed. I said I could put him into communication with a Cabinet Minister who was well disposed towards Ireland, even to the extent of desiring to give her self-government, and who was a man of integrity and honour, who might be relied upon to do whatever he promised. The man, I added, was the new Lord Lieutenant for Ireland, Lord Carnarvon. Parnell expressed much satisfaction, and we debated the method by which this opportunity might be made most fruitful. I said if Parnell abandoned the idea of vengeance on the

Liberals, which I considered insensate in a popular leader, and took the ground that he would help the new Government to the best of his ability at the elections and in Parliament provided they took up the Home Rule question, at least to the extent of promising an inquiry, I would go to Ireland and open negotiations with Lord Carnarvon which Parnell might confirm later. Gray asked if my recent article in the 'National Review,' appealing to the Conservative party to carry Home Rule, was written in concert with any Conservatives. Yes, I said, I had consulted some Conservatives in the House of Commons on the subject, and the article was sent to the 'National Review,' of whose editor I knew nothing, by Lord Carnarvon. Before separating I urged on Parnell and Gray the need of getting the Tories to give a Catholic University to Ireland. Parnell demanded if there were any great need of it. Yes, I said, vital need. The Scotch had excellent schools and colleges, and they beat the Irish everywhere in the battle of life. This was very significant in the Colonies, and Gray would tell him that in Ireland the business of his large office was managed by a Scotch Presbyterian, and that James Duffy's publishing establishment was managed by another Scotch Presbyterian; not certainly that they preferred Scotch Presbyterians, but that they were of opinion that they could not get so suitable men at home. Gray assented, and Parnell said that if it could be done it ought to be done. I agreed to go to Ireland immediately, and I said I would open the business by a public letter to Lord Carnarvon on the justice and policy of conceding Home Rule.

I must now state the grounds upon which I counted on the assistance of Lord Carnarvon. During

a visit to Europe from Australia in 1874 I made his acquaintance, he being at that time Secretary of State for the Colonies. I was his guest repeatedly at Highclere and in London, and had much conversation with him on Colonial and Imperial affairs, and had an opportunity of noting him in action and in council. I was much impressed by the essential justness and fairness of his opinions, especially on questions which long controversy had rendered morbid. He was a Tory without a *soupçon* of the religious bigotry which I had so habitually seen associated with Toryism in Ireland and Australia, and as ready as any man I have ever encountered to hear his opinions frankly debated. He took up public questions, not to estimate the party results they might yield, but to determine what was just and necessary respecting them. He spoke of Australian Federation, Imperial Federation, and, to my great satisfaction, the claims of Ireland to self-government. He seemed to have arrived at the conclusion that the honour and interest of the Empire demanded some settlement of the Irish claims which would put an end to chronic disaffection. These were topics on which I had long pondered, and had naturally much to say, to which he listened with courtesy and attention. I probably proposed, at any rate I undertook, to write a paper on the Federation of the Empire, including the Federation of Ireland. I did not keep a copy of this paper, and after a quarter of a century might have forgotten its existence but that a note of Lord Carnarvon of that date acknowledging the receipt of it revives the subject in my memory, and shows conclusively that for a dozen years before his Irish Vice-Royalty he was deeply engaged on the Irish problem.

'Gedling Rectory, Nottingham: September '74.

'DEAR SIR GAVAN DUFFY,—Your letter and memorandum have found me where I am staying for a few days. Let me thank you much for them. The subject of our conversation at Highclere had not in any way escaped me. I have indeed thought much of it, but I was very glad to have your opinion actually on paper, and in a form so clear and complete as that in which you have expressed it. I will give it every attention, and when later in the autumn we again meet I will tell you the result of my consideration.

'I certainly will not fail to give you notice of my scheme for an undress reception, for I retain a lively recollection of the friendly interest that you have taken in it. It only depends on our getting access to the new buildings, and this I should hope may be early in November.

'I hope that you will now feel the benefit of your baths (at Aix-les-Bains). As a rule the advantage of them comes out after your return home. At the time they mainly exhaust the patient.

'Believe me, yours very sincerely,

'CARNARVON.'

The undress reception referred to in the end of the note was a very practical project of having together once a fortnight, I think, the leading colonists then in Europe, who might frankly interchange opinions with the Minister and with each other.

When I returned finally to Europe, in 1880, I saw much of Lord Carnarvon. His mind was set on attempting certain large measures, and he perhaps thought that I might be of some service in removing difficulties. As I was an unequivocal Home Ruler, he

assumed, and had a right to assume, that I saw means of carrying Home Rule into operation without injustice to the great interests which it would affect. I urged him to make some sign of his sympathy with Irish claims, but he very naturally sought to have the question threshed out before committing himself in any public manner. In the spring of 1883 he suggested the main difficulties of the case, the prejudices which ought to be allayed, and the interests which ought to be rendered safe from possible spoliation :

'43 Portman Square : April 28, 1883.

'DEAR SIR GAVAN DUFFY,—I have received and carefully read the paper which you have sent me. The subject is one which it would be far easier to talk over in friendly conversation than to discuss on paper, but, writing in confidence and as lawyers say "without prejudice," I do not like to remain entirely silent in answer to your letter.

'Viewing the matter, then, as one of argument I should say that the weak point in the reasoning is this —that it is difficult to see the guarantee which you and every fair man would desire to give to the English, and especially the English landowning population, for the security of their property when once the legislation and government of the country are transferred to the Irish people. After the events of the last three years some real security cannot be considered unreasonable, and they should be free either to part with their property at a fair value, or their possession of it should be guaranteed to them by some process, which I am afraid from the nature of the circumstances is impossible. I do not see how a money compensation could be found without undue recourse to the English

taxpayer, and a constitution furnished with safeguards to give a voice to the minority and security to property would or might become an object of attack to agitators, and unless supported by English force—which is a supposition fatal to the whole idea on which we are arguing—it would be swept away. I do not say that this would necessarily happen, but the recent agitation in Ireland makes it at least essential to guard against it; for, bad as things are, such a contingency, which would mean anarchy of the worst kind, would only make it worse.

'Some option to sell at a fair price or to remain and take their chance under a fair constitution as carefully guarded and guaranteed as possible seems alone, in point of argument, to meet the conditions of the case; but here, as I have said, you would be confronted by the magnitude of the amount required and the practical impossibility of providing it.

'I conclude that you are still at Nice, and I hope the better for it in health. Believe me,

'Yours very sincerely,

'CARNARVON.'

I feared that the whole plan might be wrecked by the need of purchasing out the landlords at an enormous cost, and I urged upon him not to insist on that condition. It seemed to me that the essential basis of an arrangement acceptable to the Tory party must be that the Irish proprietors shall stay at home and do their duty, as the gentry of other countries do. Why should they not do so? It was the unspoken condition on which their class exists, and its privileges can be justified only if they perform the public duties for which they are specially fit.

There was one class of proprietors, and one only, in respect to whom I thought a provision ought to be made for buying out their interests—the absentees who have estates in England. They could not be expected to reside in Ireland, and they have always been a disturbing element there. Ireland has been governed at their discretion, and with a care mainly to their individual interests, at any time that can be specified from the sixteenth century downwards.

But the securities which he claimed against the rash or illegitimate disturbance of the fundamental conditions of the new constitution ought, I admitted—and could, I insisted—be provided. It is not necessary that I should go into details here, as I specified at a later period in a 'Review' article the securities I relied on.

I was fortunate enough to obtain the admission of many noted Unionists that it was sufficient.[1]

In the middle of October 1884 I made a visit of some days to Highclere with a view to the free colloquial discussion which Lord Carnarvon desired. The time had manifestly come to consider the Irish question, not as an academic thesis, but as a practical problem which might soon demand immediate handling. I was of opinion that there were many other Conservatives, especially in the House of Commons, who thought that this problem ought to be speedily dealt with, and I undertook to write an article showing that there was nothing in the principles or practice of the party which prohibited them from undertaking the task. I wrote an article entitled 'An Appeal to the

[1] *A Fair Constitution for Ireland*, by Sir C. Gavan Duffy, K.C.M.G. Republished as a pamphlet from the *Contemporary Review* by Sampson Low, Marston & Co., London.

Conservative Party,' which Lord Carnarvon sent to the 'National Review,'[1] their monthly organ. It excited wide controversy, and was unexpectedly well received by the Conservative Press. A mere glance at the Appeal will be sufficient for my present purpose, but such a glance is necessary to explain Lord Carnarvon's connection with the Irish problem, for I stated only opinions which I was persuaded he also held. I reminded Conservatives that there was nothing in their hereditary policy which forbade them to take the claims of Ireland into favourable consideration, and nothing in the nature of these claims which justified English gentlemen in rejecting them without further inquiry.

The Tories got their historic name (*Toree* = Irish *Rapparee*) from their sympathy with oppressed Catholics whom the Whigs were plundering or loading with penal laws. On the fundamental principles of loyalty and obedience to authority, Irish Catholics and English Tories were then in accord; but the Irish wing of the Tory party were Puritans for the most part (were, in fact, bitter Whigs of the original type), and they gave what in modern times would be called an Orange tinge to the policy of the entire connection. The original amity, however, justified the presumption that there is no essential and immovable barrier between Conservatives and the Irish people. They were friends at the beginning—why should they not still be friends?

It was on behalf of Tories of the last century that the first offer to repeal the penal laws was made. William Pitt, prompted by Edmund Burke, projected the complete emancipation of Catholics. Burke said, in so many words: 'If you do not emancipate the Catholics, they will naturally and inevitably join the Republican conspiracy hatched in Belfast.' But a cabal in Dublin, in the interest of Protestant ascendency, thwarted the design of the statesmen, and from that day forth the Whigs, who took up the measure which their opponents abandoned, have been able to count on Irish Catholics as allies against the Tories.

[1] February 1885,

To indicate that Ireland need not depend exclusively on the Tory party I quoted some language of Mr.

When Emancipation came at last, more than a generation later, it was the Tories who carried it, and carried it against another revolt of their allies in Ireland. The gates of the Constitution were thrown open by Wellington and Peel, but to appease the discontented wing in Ireland not one Catholic was invited to enter and be seated. Soft words do not butter potatoes any more than parsnips, and Irishmen were not content with this barren victory. Thus another opportunity for making friends of a whole nation was wantonly thrown away.

The Irish land question had become the special property of the Liberal party, because they were first to legislate upon it. But the teaching which must precede legislation began with their adversaries. Michael Sadler, a Conservative gentleman, was the earliest Englishman to demand justice for Irish farmers. He preached their rights to Parliament and the English people with passionate conviction and genuine sympathy, but he preached to deaf ears. A generation later Sir Joseph Napier, Irish Attorney-General of the Derby Government of 1852, made a serious and generous attempt to settle the question. His measures passed the House of Commons, but the Irish peers, taking fright at the concessions which Mr. Disraeli made to the Tenant League party, induced Lord Derby to repudiate what had been done or promised; and a week later his Government came to an end by the desertion of the Tenant League members, who considered themselves betrayed. Again the Tory party were first to take in hand the question of middle-class education in Ireland; and if the Queen's Colleges founded by Sir Robert Peel failed, it was once more the Tories, led by Mr. Disraeli and Lord Cairns, who proposed an effectual reform of the system. Thus free altars, secure homesteads, and that effectual education which is an essential equipment in the battle of modern life, were all in turn proposed, and two of the three carried into law, by the party whom I now addressed.

With such a record, why should it be impossible for English Conservatives to settle the Irish question? Was it that the demand made by Irishmen for the control of their own affairs is repugnant to the principles and policy of the Tory party? Very far from it,

Gladstone's which seemed to me a guarantee that sooner or later he would declare for Home Rule and take in hand the greatest question which remained for the treatment of an Imperial statesman. 'I honour Mr. Gladstone,' I said, 'for his services to Ireland, and I would rejoice to see his career crowned by the greatest achievement which remains for a British statesman to perform. But if another be ready to do it sooner and better, the wreath and the palm, the applause and the benedictions, are for the victor. We hail as a Hercules not him who has planned, but him who has accomplished one of the twelve labours.'

To illustrate the acceptance of the overture by the Press would occupy inordinate space; an extract from the Irish correspondent of the 'Times' will sufficiently indicate its general tendency:

It was the Tory Cabinet of Sir Robert Peel which laid the basis of colonial freedom by establishing parliamentary government in Canada. The men who had been proclaimed rebels because they insisted on the government of Canada by Canadians were called to power as responsible Ministers of the Crown; with what results we know. Canada has become more and more an integral part of the Empire It was the first Government of Lord Derby, a dozen years later, which established similar institutions in Australia. These prosperous and aspiring States are now ruled as England is ruled, and as Ireland desires to be ruled. The Imperial Government cannot control their local institutions any more than it can control the rising or setting of the morning star. And among the divers communities who recognise the supremacy of the Imperial Crown, who are more faithful to its interests than the colonists of Canada and Australia? Had the claims of Canada been treated as the claims of Ireland have been treated hitherto, there would have been a different result to exhibit.

On the eve of an election which may and must fix their position for a long future, it surely behoves Conservatives still more than Whigs to consider what it is fitting they should do in the premises.

Sir Charles Gavan Duffy's article in the 'National Review,' recommending the Conservative party to come to an understanding with the Home Rulers for a settlement of the Irish question upon fair and equitable terms, has excited much interest among various classes of politicians here, and is very freely discussed. The writer's early connection with the Young Ireland movement as one of its most prominent and influential leaders, his long experience afterwards as a member of a colonial legislature which enjoys self-government, and as a statesman invested with the responsibilities of office as Prime Minister, and the moderate and conciliatory tone in which he writes, are elements of consideration which give a weight and significance to his proposal such as no essay of a mere theorist or speculative politician could possess. Loyalists are ready to enter into any combination which offers a chance of expressing, by their action, the bitter disappointment and resentment which they feel. Others, taking a calm and practical view of the altered circumstances, seem to think that it is a matter of imperative necessity to make the best terms they can with their opponents, and no longer maintain a hopeless struggle against a power which has been so strengthened by Ministerial encouragement and Imperial legislation as to become in a short time overwhelming. Sir Charles Duffy is too keen a politician and too sagacious an observer of public events not to see the favourable moment which is now presented for interposing as a mediator between parties who have hitherto been contending and are now resting upon their arms, and endeavouring to bring about an *entente cordiale* which may help to realise the object which he has always had at heart.

It may well be that the tone of the Press on this occasion encouraged Lord Carnarvon to believe the opportunity for settling the Irish question was at length at hand. As a general election was approaching, I urged upon him to induce his colleagues, the leaders of the Opposition, to indicate the intention of considering the Irish problem with a view to a settlement. The objections he made to immediate action were just and reasonable. He was determined to act, but not to act prematurely or without the co-operation of his ordinary allies. This was his reply:

Pixton Park, Dulverton: March 3, '85.

'Dear Sir Gavan Duffy,—You will have seen by the papers how severe the political crisis has been, and you will have known from your own political experience how impossible it was to do anything beyond the necessities of the hour. The pressure is somewhat relieved; but I find very many difficulties on all sides —and some of them aggravated by the recent Fenian explosions and by the reports which are constantly appearing in the papers of dynamite conferences and further intended outrage. But I am mindful of our correspondence and conversation, and am very anxious, so far as I have the power, to get the whole question considered by those who can best deal with it, and without whom it would be vain to look for a satisfactory result. All this means more delay than I personally desire; but you know what public life is, and how impossible it is to hurry matters even when one is conscious oneself of the value of time. This above all seems clear to me, that premature action would do far more mischief than present delay. There are so many different interests, individuals, party considerations, that it is extremely difficult to act, and the present extraordinarily disturbed condition of politics abroad makes it almost impossible to secure the necessary attention for any subject, however important. Egypt, France, Germany, and India threaten, each of them, from day to day to raise issues which for the moment obscure everything else, however important. I never remember in my public life a time of such pressure and real anxiety. I write to you quite freely and frankly, because I know that you prefer this, and because I wish you to understand how very great are the difficulties which exist; at the same time, I do not

think the time has been wasted since my return to England. My tendency, as I think I said to you, is in all these matters to be cautious, and to avoid any premature step which must prejudice future action; and I specially dislike to seem to promise more than I can fulfil. In this case, as you know, the action of an individual is worth little; it must be the concurrence of many to bring about any satisfactory result, and this is not easy or very quickly to be obtained.

'I am here only for a few days, and London is on the whole my safest address.

'I have had both your letters, including your last of February 27, which, however, only reached me here this morning.

'Lady Carnarvon desires me to thank you very much for the book on the vine cultivation, which she will doubtless receive in a day or two, and to which she is looking forward. I wish we were in a climate suitable to the growth of grapes! It is now blowing and pouring in a truly English fashion. Believe me,

'Yours very truly,

'CARNARVON.'

I doubtless urged various reasons for prompter action than he contemplated—of which, however, I have kept no record—for this was his rejoinder:

'DEAR SIR GAVAN DUFFY,—I have just returned here from London, and I take the first opportunity of replying to your last letter.

'Knowing as I do your anxious desire to find a solution for that great question on which your heart is naturally set, I am afraid you will not think my answer a very satisfactory one—and yet it is the only one which I can honestly give.

'My personal sympathies are, as you know, largely with you. I believe I might say the same of many of my political friends, though, as I have always said, I can only speak for myself; but I have come unwillingly to the conclusion that at this moment, in the very critical state of foreign affairs, with a general election close upon us, with a condition of parties which enormously enhances the great difficulties of the question itself, it is not practicable—or indeed wise—to attempt any forward step. And however strong your own wish is towards a different conclusion, I think you will agree that this view is not an unreasonable one.

'My belief is that till the General Election is over and both parties know their strength any attempt to settle this great controversy will not only be hopeless, but will distinctly prejudice the result; and if this is so, it is clearly one of those cases in which the best chance of a settlement lies in patience and some—and not a very long—delay.

'I hope that you will believe that I say this from no desire to spare myself labour or anxiety. I appreciate too much the transcendent importance of the subject. But I have come slowly to this conclusion, and only after taking every means in my power to satisfy myself of the correctness of it. If you do not agree with me, I should yet like to know that you do not wholly disagree. Believe me,

'Yours very truly,

'CARNARVON.

'Pixton Park, Dulverton: March 18, 1885.'

I have kept copies of none of my letters to Lord Carnarvon, but I find this rough draft of my reply to the last note, which contains at least the substance of what I said to him:

'March 24, 1885.

'Dear Lord Carnarvon,—As you invite me to express an opinion on the determination you have arrived at, I will do so with the frankness and sincerity you would expect. You are so much better acquainted than I can possibly be with the difficulties to be encountered among your friends in raising the Irish question at present that it would be idle to debate that point. I never doubted there were serious difficulties and rooted prejudices to overcome, but what has any statesman accomplished worth remembering of which as much might not be said? Statesmen ignore the prejudices of their supporters because they are wiser and stronger than they. I pictured to myself that a statesman who possesses every blessing that fortune can bestow on a man would find in its difficulty one of the main charms of an enterprise. What is easily done, what any one can do, is scarce worth doing by the exceptional man. His purpose ought to "stream like a thundercloud *against* the wind."

'As respects the condition of parties and the approach of a general election, they seem to me to favour action rather than to forbid it.

'Is not something due to the Irish party? If they had not voted with the Opposition there would be no political crisis in Parliament, but a triumphant and irresistible Government. And again, remember, had the Conservatives taken up the question in the spirit you were disposed to do, there would probably not be one Whig elected for Ireland in 1886. In many English constituencies the result would have been felt, for Irish voters would naturally have supported candidates of the party most friendly to Irish interests.

'Of course I see, on the other hand, that English

counties, if the question were as suddenly presented to them, might be alarmed and offended; that you don't know the views of the new electors; and that there are party troubles enough already without increasing them. These are solid and prudent reasons in ordinary times; but we live in a period of revolution, when the party of resistance must stake everything on a general election. If, without the help of new friends, they are likely to be in a minority in the new Parliament, then the urgent problem is to find new friends.

'I may mention—though of course it counts for nothing—that I had taken certain measures in relation to the intended movement. The Irish Catholic bishops are going to Rome after Easter, and I proposed to see certain of them at Nice on their way back, if I were by that time authorised to make a specific statement to them. I had also replied to letters from some of the Irish members that I would go to London in June, with a view to consult with them, expecting to be able to speak to them on the same subject. I can now say nothing to either.'

Four months later the Gladstone Government fell and the Tories were called to office. To my great satisfaction, Lord Carnarvon undertook the office of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Before leaving London, to secure himself from the ravenous herd of place-beggars who assail a new Minister, he took up his quarters for a week or two in a friend's house where no one could reach him without a passport. I saw him several times there, and was much pleased with his scheme of Irish policy. I promised to go to Ireland, and obtained his consent that I should address a letter to him in the

newspapers urging him to adopt Home Rule, without, however, intimating in any manner that I had reason to hope for a favourable answer.

When I arrived in Dublin I had immediately a letter from Lord Carnarvon, inviting me and my wife, who had accompanied me to Ireland, to an official dinner at the Castle on an early day, and an immediate conversation at the Viceregal Lodge in the Phœnix Park, where he was then residing. I excused myself from going to the Castle for any purpose; I had promised long ago never to enter its portals till it was occupied by a National Government or a Government in sympathy with the aims of the people, and it would seriously impair my usefulness in conferring with the National party if I accepted Castle hospitalities. But I went immediately to the Viceregal Lodge in the park, and I had a prolonged conversation with Lord Carnarvon on the business which brought me to Ireland.

Lord Carnarvon was not even now prepared to pledge himself to Home Rule, but he was prepared to inquire what specific measure of self-government would satisfy Nationalists, and whether the Protestant and propertied minority could be reconciled to such a claim. He hoped to collect a body of evidence which would enable his colleagues to come to a decision on the question, and he certainly desired that the decision might be a favourable one. He repeatedly said: 'I cannot answer for my colleagues; I can answer for no one but myself. But I will submit to them whatever information I can collect, and report to you frankly what they determine.' I had urged more than once or twice that if the Government would not be prepared to go to the country with a proposal for Home Rule, which I scarcely hoped, they might authorise him to promise

that, if they came back from the General Election with a majority, they would appoint a select committee empowered to hear evidence on the question, and whose report might form the basis of future legislation. He thought there would be great difficulty in getting them to consent to a measure which involved such manifest consequences, and I suggested that the proposal might be for a committee to inquire into the federation of the Empire, of which the relations with Ireland would form a necessary part. He still saw difficulties, as no doubt there were. I told him frankly I had advised Mr. Parnell not to take the serious responsibility of recommending Irish electors to support Tory candidates unless they knew what Ireland was to have in return, and as the election was near at hand this was a question which must be settled without delay for the mutual convenience of the parties concerned.

The Under-Secretary at this time was Sir Robert Hamilton, a Scotchman of the just and sympathetic nature of Thomas Drummond. He was impatient of the total want of local government in Ireland, and the absence of the popular element from whatever boards or committees administered public affairs. He was of much service to Lord Carnarvon in gathering his materials and formulating his opinions, and when I met him I found a man whom I could esteem and respect. I speedily published a letter to Lord Carnarvon, entitled 'The Price of Peace in Ireland.' It consisted in a great degree of arguments which I had pressed on him personally from the time we had first debated the question down to the date of writing. As the letter excited much controversy, and was well received by the organs of the Conservative party in Ireland, I must fly through its leading features. I

welcomed Lord Carnarvon to Ireland, because I was persuaded his object in coming there was to perform work which would render his Irish Viceroyalty memorable. Its routine duties could have few attractions for a statesman who had handled important interests and guided large issues. Out of a long list of soldiers and nobles who had held that office the majority were quite forgotten, some were remembered only because they had left an evil reputation, but a chosen few would live for ever in the grateful memory of the Irish people. Lord Fitzwilliam shines in our annals like the morning star of dawning liberty. Commissioned by Pitt to concede complete emancipation to the Catholics in the last century, while O'Connell was still an unknown law student, he was baffled and thwarted by the bigotry which has been the blackest curse of the island; but though he failed, he is fondly remembered for what he devised and attempted. Lord Wellesley and Lord Anglesea bade us hope and strive when our counsels were most crossed and troubled. But above all, Lord Mulgrave, the first representative of the Crown in Ireland since the surrender of Limerick who dared to be greatly just. His son, the present Marquis of Normanby, served at the centre and at the extremities of the Empire, and wherever he went he assured me he found Irishmen who held his father's name in reverence and affection. But there was a wider and more permanent renown to be won than any of these Viceroys achieved. It remained by one happy stroke to give peace to Ireland, and to make the connection of these islands secure and permanent.

There was only one method—an easy and obvious one. It succeeded in other countries in graver difficulties. There never was any other method, there

never would be any other. All others were doomed to certain disaster and failure. It was needless to name it; it was in every man's mind and on every man's tongue. The statesman who accomplished this task would leave a name which would live as long as history endures. No one knew better than an ex-Secretary of State for the Colonies what pregnant examples the colonial empire furnishes of the supreme policy and wisdom of doing justice to the oppressed. Half a century ago the great colonies were more disturbed and discontented than Ireland in 1880.

Lower Canada was organising insurrection under Catholic gentlemen of French descent, and Upper Canada was in arms under a Scotch Presbyterian. Australia was then only a great pastoral settlement, but bitter discontent and angry menaces were heard in all its centres of population, provoked by the shameful practice of discharging the criminals of England like a deluge of filth on that young country.

But Sir Robert Peel set the example of granting to the Colonies the control of their own affairs, and now Melbourne or Montreal was more exuberantly loyal to the Empire than London or Edinburgh. 'The New South Wales expedition to the Soudan was received with a roar of exultation throughout England; but that remarkable transaction, however warmly it was applauded, was imperfectly understood. The true moral it teaches is this—that it is wise and safe to be just. The acting Prime Minister of the colony who despatched that expedition was an Australian Catholic of Irish descent. If his native country were governed as Ireland has been governed, he had the stuff in him to be a leader of revolt. But it is permitted to govern itself, and we see the result. In Victoria the risk of war with Russia called out a demonstration as energetic. The Irish population undertook to raise a regiment of a thousand men for the defence of the territory where they found freedom and prosperity. Their spokesman was a young Irish Catholic, who had been a Minister of State at Melbourne at an age when his father was a prisoner of State in Dublin for the crime of insisting that Ireland should possess the complete autonomy which his children now enjoy in the new country.' These were some of

the natural consequences of fair play in the Colonies. Was there any reason to doubt that a like cause in Ireland would produce like effects? Nothing that the blackest pessimist predicted on the danger of entrusting Ireland with the management of her own affairs was more offensive or alarmist than the vaticinations of colonial officials half a century ago on the perils of entrusting colonists with political power.

Human nature has the same spiritual warp and woof in the Old World as in the New, and what has made Irish Catholics contented and loyal on the banks of the Paramatta and the Yarra Yarra would make them contented and loyal on the banks of the Liffey or the Shannon.

I felt almost ashamed to add that what I meditated was a settlement of the Irish question, accepted, as well as offered, in good faith; a plan capable of being worked for the common good of Irishmen, not for any special creed or class, but for all alike, and which would be defended against all enemies from within or from without in the same spirit in which it was accepted. This, and nothing short of this, had been the design of my whole public life; and I was as faithful to it now as when I shared the counsels of O'Connell or O'Brien.

In conclusion, I said I was not in the least afraid that the religious freedom of the minority would be endangered, but I would rejoice to see a risk which was improbable frankly rendered impossible.

No one, as far as I knew, desired to disturb the Act of Settlement, but the Act of Settlement ought to be put entirely beyond question. Your Excellency knows that in Colonial and American constitutions dangers of the same general character had to be guarded against, and have been guarded against successfully. The French-Canadian Catholics, who are now a handful in the midst of a nation, would not enter into the Dominion without guarantees for their religious liberty and their hereditary possessions; and you know these have been effectually secured and are safe beyond all risk.

For myself, as one Catholic Celt, I would say that the men I

most honour in our history, and the friends I have most loved in life, belonged in a large proportion to a race and creed which are not mine. Swift and Molyneux, Flood and Grattan, were not only Protestants, but the sons of English officials serving in Dublin courts and bureaux. Curran, Tone, and Father Mathew were the descendants of Cromwellian settlers. The father of the best Irishman I have ever known, or ever hope to know, who has been the idol of two generations of students and thinkers, was a Welshman, wearing the uniform of an English regiment. The price of peace in Ireland was simple and specific. To proffer reforms and revisions of the existing system in lieu of National Government was insensate. If a sane man had been put into a lunatic asylum and the administration of his estate given to strangers, it would be idle to offer him ameliorations of his condition as a remedy. What he wants is to get out. A softer bed and more succulent fare are good things doubtless, but what are they worth to a *détenu* impatient to escape from bonds and resume the control of his life?

It is tragical to recall the cordial sympathy with which these sentiments were received by Protestants of the professional classes, by officials, and by the journalists of the Conservative party. Irish Nationalists of the extremest type also welcomed this solution of our difficulties. There was only one class intractable—the Irish gentry. I prefer that they should be judged by one who knew them more intimately, and perhaps judged them more considerately, than I did. The Rev. Dr. Galbraith, Senior Fellow of Trinity College, was the ablest and most steadfast of the Protestant middle class who had joined Mr. Butt's Home Rule movement. I had been absent thirty years from Ireland, and I asked him to advise me who were the leading men among the gentry able to influence them, and perhaps entitled to speak for them. His answer was that there were no such persons:

'Trinity College, Dublin: February 22, 1885.

'My dear Sir Charles,—I am much flattered by

your addressing me on so important a question, yet I read your letter with a melancholy interest. I need hardly say that I quite concur in your political opinions with regard to Ireland, but I am sorry to say that the Protestant gentry of Ireland are as blind to the future as ever they were. They stand on the brink of a precipice, and don't seem to be aware of it. Within the last few days, I may say, they have begun to perceive that the English Conservatives are prepared to throw them over. You must have seen by the time you read this of their deputation to Sir Stafford Northcote, asking that something should be done for the "Loyal Minority" with new Franchise and Redistribution Scheme, and his cold and slighting answer.

'A handful of them have met in a back parlour in London to found an "Independent Irish Conservative Party," bless the mark!

'One hundred and three years ago they met in College Green with colours flying, drums beating, and cannon loaded to demand and insist on their rights. Alas! how changed! I see no hope for them unless God works a miracle. There is not a single man with brains among them, but one, but he has no legs and could not lead even if he had a mind to. You perceive I give them up. From my position I ought to wish them well. Not that they have done much for "Old Trinity"; quite the opposite. Yet I do wish them well, but their cause is hopeless.

'I am sorry to have to write such a letter, especially to a man like you, who has spent a long life in serving Ireland and wishes to crown it by a glorious effort.

'Believe me, yours sincerely,

'JOSEPH A. GALBRAITH.'

Lord Carnarvon might attain better access than I could to the Irish gentry, such as they were, and a notable English member of Parliament, who has been much heard of since as the leader of a clamorous parliamentary group, made inquiries for him among the landed and professional classes. To illustrate how securities for sensitive interests might be obtained, I at the same time wrote a series of papers in the 'Freeman's Journal' on 'Colonial Constitutions,' which Lord Carnarvon found very useful.

'I have read,' he wrote, 'your articles on "Colonial Constitutions" with great interest, and I am glad to see that there is another in to-day's "Freeman." I hope that you will continue them, for I am satisfied that they are very useful.'

In Whig society in Dublin at that time there was manifestly a growing conviction, and not by any means a too cheerful one, that the great change was coming. But old officials, and men who had prospered in finance and speculation, were intractable. 'What does the man want?' said one of these to me at a dinner party, speaking of Lord Carnarvon. 'He has got all a sensible man can hope for or desire—high rank, an adequate fortune, charming wife, political and social influence—what the d——l more can he hope to get by this new "will o' the wisp"? He may lose much, but he can gain nothing worth having.' It would have been talking an unknown tongue to tell my interlocutor that these great gifts of fortune which Lord Carnarvon enjoyed implied corresponding duties from which an honourable man dare not shrink.

I saw Lord Carnarvon as often as his engrossing engagements would permit, and he made occasional visits to London. In one of these visits he fulfilled a

purpose which he had long held of seeing Mr. Parnell personally. He was naturally anxious to ascertain the views of the parliamentary leader of the limits and conditions to which the Nationalists would consent, if a statutory Parliament were created. He had certainly no intention of promising Home Rule to Mr. Parnell, but such a conference would naturally raise hopes that as far as he was concerned he wished it to come, as no doubt he did. But he guarded himself always with the scrupulous care of a conscientious gentleman against committing anybody. He thought it would be discreet to see a second member of the party, and I told him I regarded Mr. Justin McCarthy as next in importance to the leader; and he had a conversation with him, which I think took place before his interview with Mr. Parnell. None of these proceedings were communicated to Mr. Dwyer Gray, and as that gentleman was bound to specify from day to day in his newspaper the position and prospects of the Irish question, he grew, not unnaturally, discontented and complained to me. I told him that I considered as strictly confidential all communications with Lord Carnarvon, and could not utter a word, but that his complaint, in my opinion, was a reasonable one, and I would ask Lord Carnarvon to receive him personally, and he doubtless would tell him as much as he thought fit of his purpose and proceedings. Mr. Gray was received by Lord Carnarvon more than once, I think, and communicated with Mr. Parnell on the situation. But he respected my confidential relations with Lord Carnarvon, and asked me no more questions.

There can be no doubt that Lord Salisbury and that inner Cabinet of the party which controls all administration were habitually informed of what Lord

Carnarvon was doing, and were, it may be fairly assumed, weighing the policy of conceding what the Irish demanded, as Pitt weighed the policy of conceding the Catholic claims. I had soon reason to fear that their conclusions were not favourable to our demand. At the beginning of August Lord Carnarvon had need to go to London, saw his colleagues, and returned to Dublin much perturbed. He announced his intended run to England in this note:

'Vice-Regal Lodge, Dublin: July 29, 1885.

'Dear Sir Gavan Duffy,—You will have seen in the papers the death of Lady Chesterfield, which makes it necessary for me to leave Ireland for the funeral, which is on Friday. As I shall then be in England, I must go on to London to see my colleagues, and cannot be back till Monday night at earliest.

'I have been unable to settle this till this morning, but I write at once to ask you whether you can come over here this afternoon instead of to-morrow.

'I am engaged to be in Dublin by 4 P.M., and have not one moment after that hour at my disposal; but any time this morning I am quite free. About a quarter before one, *if quite convenient to you*, would on the whole suit me best. Pray excuse the haste with which I write, and

'Believe me, yours very sincerely,

'Carnarvon.'

After his return I saw in a moment that his high hopes were chilled, that he had not found the assistance from his colleagues which he anticipated, and would not be in a position to satisfy the expectations he had raised. I shall not attempt to report a conversation at

such a distance of time, but Lord Carvarvon used one phrase which I concluded was an echo from Hatfield: 'We might gain,' he said, 'all you promise in Ireland by taking the course you suggest, but we should lose more in England.' This was the keynote of the policy adopted by the Government in the autumn of 1885. Lord Carnarvon was willing and anxious to do all he could, but it was manifest he could do very little when such a sentiment possessed his colleagues.

Lord Carnarvon did not despair of having the Irish question reconsidered after the General Election. It seemed to me, however, highly improbable that it would be more favourably considered when the fight for a majority was over than when Irish support at the hustings was of vital importance. I did not doubt Lord Carnarvon's good faith; but I altogether doubted that he would obtain the co-operation of men who came to the conclusion that they had more to lose in England than to gain in Ireland. I told him I would leave Ireland to avoid any responsibility for the course taken at the General Election. He was in personal communication with the leader of the Irish party and with two of his principal lieutenants, and it was their duty to determine whether they would be justified in supporting the Government at the coming election without the certainty of any political compensation. I would tell Mr. Dwyer Gray what I thought of the situation and the disappointment I had met with.

Before leaving Ireland I gave an interview to a representative of the 'Freeman's Journal,' in which I answered several pertinent questions. To the inquiry what the Government were going to do, I replied that of the intentions of the Government I could say nothing, but I had talked to men of all parties and

classes in Ireland, and there never was so much disposition to consider the question of Home Rule as one that must be dealt with. To questions about the disposition of the gentry I replied that if they did not fall in with the present movement the consequences would probably be disastrous to them. The most shameful fiscal system in any civilised country was the one by which three-and-twenty gentlemen in a grand jury impose taxation, often for the improvement of their own property upon a rack-rented tenantry. And the declared enemy of monopoly, Mr. Chamberlain, when his turn came, might be counted on to make short work of that system. The English Radicals generally were of opinion that the cost and trouble of misgoverning Ireland have come from the habit of protecting Irish landlords in the exercise of a feudal tyranny, and that a prodigious saving might be effected by simply ceasing to protect them.

After I left Ireland I fulfilled an engagement to spend a few days at the country house of a public man who had been one of Mr. Gladstone's colleagues in the last Liberal Cabinet and became a colleague in the ensuing one. He naturally spoke of the design of the Irish electors to vote against the party who had disestablished the Irish Church and gave Ireland a popular land code and a popular franchise.

I told him that I sympathised with the intention of the Irish electors to support the Tories at the poll when I thought the Tory Government were about to consider the Home Rule question favourably, but I had no longer any confidence in that intention. I added that I could not doubt from some recent speeches that Mr. Gladstone was gradually approaching Home Rule, and if he could be induced to make a satisfactory

avowal on that question before the Dissolution the Irish electors would undoubtedly prefer candidates who adopted his opinion. To make sure that they should, I would be willing to return immediately to Ireland and confer with the leaders of the Irish party. The difficulties of premature action were of course serious; but there is no necessity of dwelling further on the subject, as nothing came of this inchoate negotiation.

When the General Election took place, this was the result of the contest: Gladstonians elected, 333; Conservatives, 251; Irish Nationalists, 86. Mr. Parnell had supported the Conservatives in England and Ireland, but his speeches during the election did not at all echo the spirit of fierce hostility to the Gladstonian party which animated the address to the Irish electors in England. Conservatives and Parnellites united would make a majority of four in the new Parliament, but this was not a working majority, and there was no longer any real harmony between the two parties. On the other hand, a union of the Gladstonians and Parnellites would make an effective majority, and this was a result widely anticipated.

The story of Mr. Gladstone's pronouncement for Home Rule and the loyal adhesion which Irish Nationalists gave him is beside my present purpose. But it was in this new relation that Mr. Parnell committed what I consider the most serious offence of his political life. He disclosed to Parliament and the public the conversations with Lord Carnarvon, which were essentially private. If Lord Carnarvon had renounced and deserted the opinions which he held before the General Election, some excuse might be found for Mr. Parnell holding him to account for his backsliding. But Lord Carnarvon had not altered at all; simply, he

had failed to induce his colleagues to co-operate with him.

On the second reading of Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule Bill, Mr. Parnell, on the twelfth night of the debate, said: 'When the Tories were in office we had reason to know that the Conservative party, if they should be successful at the polls, would have offered Ireland a statutory legislature with a right to protect her own industries, and that this would have been coupled with the settlement of the Irish land question on the basis of purchase, on a larger scale than that now proposed by the Prime Minister.'

Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, later in the debate, said: 'I must, for myself and for my colleagues, state, in the plainest and most distinct terms, that I utterly and categorically deny that the late Conservative Government ever had any such intention.'

Parnell. 'Does the right hon. gentleman mean to deny that that intention was communicated to me by one of his own colleagues—a Minister of the Crown?'

Sir M. Hicks-Beach. 'Yes, sir, I do (cries of "Name"), to the best of my knowledge and belief; and if any such statement was communicated by anyone to the hon. member, I am certain he had not the authority to make it. (Renewed cries of "Name.") Will the hon. member do us the pleasure to give the name to the House?'

Parnell. 'The right hon. gentleman has asked me a question which he knows is a very safe one. (Cries of "Oh!") I shall be very glad to communicate the name of his colleague when I receive his colleague's permission to do so.' (Cries of "Oh!" "Name!")

Sir M. Hicks-Beach. 'Insinuations are easily made. To prove them is a very different thing; and I

have observed that the rules of the code of honour of hon. members below the gangway step in at the point when proof becomes necessary.' [1]

Things had now reached a point which any man of parliamentary experience might have foreseen, when privacy could not be maintained, and Lord Carnarvon's name was disclosed in the newspapers. Lord Carnarvon immediately justified himself in the House of Lords. He had certainly not entitled Mr. Parnell to declare that the Conservative party had proffered Ireland a statutory Parliament in case of their success at the polls, though he had inquired into the nature of the measure which in Mr. Parnell's opinion would satisfy Ireland, and expressed his own willingness that such a measure should be conceded. And as he had certainly communicated to Lord Salisbury and other of his colleagues the nature of his parley with Mr. Parnell, Sir M. Hicks-Beach was not justified in the sweeping nature of his denial.

Speaking for himself, Lord Carnarvon said: 'I would gladly see some limited form of self-government, not in any way independent of Imperial control, such as may satisfy real local requirements and, to some extent, national aspirations. I would gladly see a settlement where, the rights of property and of minorities being on the whole secured, both nations might rest from this long and weary struggle, and steady and constitutional progress might be patiently and gradually evolved.' And with respect to his colleagues, in a later speech Lord Carnarvon said: 'I should have been wanting in my duty if I had failed to inform my noble friend at the head of the Government of my intention of holding that meeting with Mr. Parnell,

[1] *Hansard*, vol. cccvi. pp. 1199–1200.

and of what had passed between us at the interview, at the earliest possible moment. Accordingly, both by writing and by words, I gave the noble Marquis as careful and as accurate a statement as possible of what had occurred within twenty-four hours after the meeting, and my noble friend was good enough to say that I had conducted that meeting with perfect discretion.'

The case will now, I think, be plain to any experienced reader.

It is my personal belief that Mr. Parnell ought not, for any party gain, to have made public these strictly private negotiations; but when the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, confessing himself a Home Ruler, though speaking strictly for himself alone, entered into such negotiations and made such inquiries in July, it was not strange that Mr. Parnell thought that if his party obtained a majority at the polls in August by the help of Irish votes they would be prepared to make the concession that Irish voters desired. His fault was not to believe this, but to make a positive assertion of what was a mere hypothesis, and to refer at all in public to transactions covered by an honourable confidence. But the disclosure could not injure Lord Carnarvon; he sincerely desired to concede Home Rule to Ireland and to induce his colleagues to co-operate with him in the concession. It was an honourable and public-spirited design, and its failure was in no respect discreditable to him.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE GENERAL ELECTION OF 1885

THE election campaign of 1885 was practically opened by Lord Salisbury in a speech at the Mansion House on July 29.

Referring to the charge that the Tories were coquetting with the Irish, the Prime Minister justified the conduct of the Government in dropping the Crimes Act, and defended the policy of Lord Carnarvon in ruling by the ordinary law. That policy, he declared, was the logical outcome of the Franchise Act of 1884, for to extend the suffrage and at the same time to ignore the voice of the people was impossible. This was the first bid for the Irish vote.

Parliament was prorogued on August 11. On August 15 we find Parnell at Aughavannah, enjoying some sport, but not unmindful of business. He wrote to Mr. McCarthy:

Parnell to Mr. McCarthy

'Aughavannah, Aughrim: August 15, 1885.

'MY DEAR MCCARTHY,—Will you kindly give —— a cheque for 100*l.* out of the fund at your and Biggar's disposal?

'I have reason to believe that ——'s affairs are not in a good position, so much so that he fears to accept the

position on the Royal Commission on Trade Depression, lest his financial arrangements might come to a climax this autumn. It would be a public calamity to permit him to be overwhelmed or driven from public life; so do you not think he might be spared, say, 300*l.* out of the fund?

'We have been having nice weather here the last two or three days, and some sport. I am sending you a brace of birds by parcel post this morning.

'Yours very truly,

'CHAS. S. PARNELL.

'P.S.—I am glad to say that I am informed Davitt shows some signs of modifying his very offensive recent action, so that there may now be some chance of avoiding an open rupture, at all events for a time.'

Nine days later Parnell took the field, raising the Home Rule flag, and saying his people would fight under it alone. The Irish platform, he declared, would consist of only one plank—legislative independence. Speaking at Dublin on August 24 he threw down the gage of battle:

'I say that each and all of us have only looked upon the Acts—the legislative enactments which we have been able to wring from an unwilling Parliament—as means towards an end; that we would have at any time, in the hours of our deepest depression and greatest discouragement, spurned and rejected any measure, however tempting and however apparently for the benefit of our people, if we had been able to detect that behind it lurked any danger to the legislative independence of our land. . . . It is admitted by all parties that you have brought the question of Irish legislative independence to the point of solution. It

is not now a question of self-government for Ireland; it is only a question as to how much of the self-government they will be able to cheat us out of. It is not now a question of whether the Irish people shall decide their own destinies and their own future, but it is a question with, I was going to say, our English masters—but we cannot call them masters in Ireland—it is a question with them as to how far the day, that they consider the evil day, shall be deferred. You are, therefore, entitled to say that so far you have done well, you have almost done miraculously well, and we hand to our successors an unsullied flag, a battle more than half won, and a brilliant history. . . . I hope that it may not be necessary for us in the new Parliament to devote our attention to subsidiary measures, and that it may be possible for us to have a programme and a platform with only one plank, and that one plank National Independence.'

This speech roused England. The Press with one voice denounced the Irish leader and the Irish programme. The 'Times' said an Irish Parliament was 'impossible.' The 'Standard' besought Whigs and Tories 'to present a firm uncompromising front to the rebel Chief.' The 'Daily Telegraph' hoped that the House of Commons would not be 'seduced or terrified into surrender.' The 'Manchester Guardian' declared that Englishmen would 'condemn or punish any party or any public man who attempted to walk in the path traced by Mr. Parnell.' The 'Leeds Mercury' did not think the question of an Irish Parliament worth discussing; while the 'Daily News' felt that Great Britain could only be saved from the tyranny of Mr. Parnell by 'a strong Administration composed of advanced Liberals.'

Lord Hartington was the first English statesman who took up the gage thrown down by the Irish leader. Speaking at Waterfoot on August 29, he said that 'Parnell had for once committed a mistake by proclaiming that Ireland's sole demand was an Irish Parliament, adding that all England would now unite in resisting "so fatal and mischievous a proposal."' Parnell, in reply, hurled defiance at the leader of the Whigs, and indeed at all England. Responding to the toast of 'Ireland a nation,' at the Mansion House, Dublin, on September 1, he said: 'I believe that if it be sought to make it impossible for our country to obtain the right to administer her own affairs, we shall make all other things impossible for those who strive to bring that about. And who is it that tells us that these things are impossible? It is the same man who said that local government for Ireland was impossible without impossible declarations on our part. These statements came from the lips which told us that the concession of equal electoral privileges to Ireland with those of England would be madness; and we see that what was considered madness in the eyes of the man who now tells us that Ireland's right to self-government is an impossibility, has been now conceded without opposition, and that the local self-government which was then also denied to us from the same source, is now offered to us by the same person, with a humble entreaty that we may take it in order that we may educate ourselves for better things and for further powers. . . . Well, gentlemen, I am not much given to boasting, and I should be very unwilling to assume for myself the *rôle* of a prophet; but I am obliged, I confess, to-night to give you my candid opinion, and it is this—that if they have not succeeded

in "squelching" us during the last five years, they are not likely to do so during the next five years, unless they brace themselves up to adopt one of two alternatives, by the adoption of either one of which we should ultimately win, and perhaps win a larger and heavier stake than we otherwise should. They will either have to grant to Ireland the complete right to rule herself, or they will have to take away from us the share—the sham share—in the English constitutional system which they extended to us at the Union, and govern us as a Crown colony.'

Two days afterwards (September 3) Lord Randolph Churchill addressed a meeting at Sheffield, but said not a word about Home Rule. Mr. Chamberlain was the next English statesman who appeared upon the scene. Addressing a meeting at Warrington on September 8, he said: 'Speaking for myself, I say that if these, and these alone, are the terms on which Mr. Parnell's support is to be obtained, I will not enter into competition for it. This new programme of Mr. Parnell's involves a greater extension than anything we have hitherto known or understood by Home Rule; the powers he claims for his support in Parliament are altogether beyond anything which exists in the case of the State Legislatures of the American Union, which has hitherto been the type and model of Irish demands, and if this claim were conceded we might as well for ever abandon all hope of maintaining a united kingdom. We should establish within thirty miles of our shores a new foreign country animated from the outset with unfriendly intentions towards ourselves. Such a policy as that, I firmly believe, would be disastrous and ruinous to Ireland herself. It would be dangerous to the security of this country, and under these circum-

stances I hold that we are bound to take every step in our power to avert so great a calamity.'

On September 16 Mr. John Morley came to the front, protesting against separation, but acquiescing in some system of Home Rule fashioned on the Canadian model.

What was Mr. Gladstone doing all this time? In answering this question I am obliged, in justice to Mr. Gladstone, to import so insignificant a person as myself into the narrative.

On August 11 I received a letter from a well-known English publicist asking me to call upon him, as he desired my help 'on a subject connected with the Union between England and Ireland.' I called. He opened the conversation by saying, 'Well, I have asked you to call upon me at the suggestion of a great man—in fact, a very great man. I won't mention his name now, but you will probably guess it. He thinks that this Irish question—this question of Home Rule—has now come to the front and must be faced. He wishes me to publish some articles, not on Home Rule, but on the Irish case generally. They must be dispassionate and historical, and he named you as the man to write them.' I suggested that the great man probably meant articles which would give some account of Ireland during the Union, which would, in fact, deal with the question whether the Union had proved a successful experiment or not. 'Exactly,' said the editor, 'and the articles must be written, not from the point of view of a political partisan, but from the point of view of an historical student.' I said I would be happy to write the articles if he liked, but that I could suggest someone who would do it infinitely better, and whose name would carry weight. 'Who?'

'Sir Gavan Duffy, who is now in London.' It was finally arranged that I should see Sir Gavan Duffy and ask him.

'This means,' said Sir Gavan Duffy, 'that Gladstone is going to take up Home Rule; and we ought certainly to help him in any way we can.' Sir Gavan, however, thought that we ought to come to closer quarters with the question than had been suggested by the editor. 'The article ought,' he said, 'to be a Home Rule article point blank.' I immediately communicated his views to the editor, who, however, was not prepared to go so far as the veteran Young Irelander. After some further *pourparlers* it was decided to let the matter 'hang fire' for a month, as I was leaving town. Meanwhile Mr. Gladstone had gone to Norway. He returned in September, and on the 18th of that month issued the famous Hawarden manifesto. I need not deal with that remarkable document generally, but the paragraph relating to Ireland must be set out:

'In my opinion, not now for the first time delivered, the limit is clear within which the desires of Ireland, constitutionally ascertained, may, and beyond which they cannot, receive the assent of Parliament. To maintain the supremacy of the Crown, the unity of the Empire, and all the authority of Parliament necessary for the conservation of that unity, is the first duty of every representative of the people. Subject to this governing principle, every grant to portions of the country of enlarged powers for the management of their own affairs is, in my view, not a source of danger, but a means of averting it, and is in the nature of a new guarantee for increased cohesion, happiness, and strength.' And he added, 'I believe history and

posterity will consign to disgrace the memory of every man, be he who he may, on whichever side of the Channel he may dwell, that, having the power to aid in an equitable arrangement between Ireland and Great Britain, shall use the power, not to aid, but to prevent or retard it.'

Sir Gavan Duffy sent this paragraph to me, saying: 'It is quite clear that Gladstone means to take up Home Rule, and I am more convinced than ever that the proper course is to write an article on Home Rule developing some scheme for an Irish Constitution. Then the question will be put fairly before the country. I am willing to write this article, taking the inclosed paragraph as my text.' I called upon the editor to tell him what Sir Gavan Duffy had said. He declined, however, to take an article on those lines. 'You must,' he said, 'write the article yourself on the lines you have already laid down. I told you that I had asked you to come to see me at the suggestion of a great man. Well, it is Mr. Gladstone himself, and the lines you have laid down are the lines he approves of for the *first* article at all events. In the second article we may come to closer quarters on the question.' At length I agreed to write the article. I understood that a proof was sent to Mr. Gladstone, and that he was satisfied with it. It was published in November.[1] About that time I first met Mr. Gladstone. He was then, as always, courteous and agreeable, and showed an unmistakable interest in Ireland; but in the short conversation we had the words 'Home Rule' were not mentioned. I spoke of the 'Irish Liberals,' and said they would be swept off the board at the General

[1] Sir Gavan Duffy suggested the title: 'Irish Wrongs and English Remedies.'

Election. 'The Irish Liberals,' he said, with an expression of sublime scorn which I shall never forget, 'the Irish Liberals! Are there any Liberals in Ireland? Where are they? I must confess [with a magnificent roll of the voice] that I feel a good deal of difficulty in recognising these Irish Liberals you talk about; and [in delightfully scoffing accents, and with an intonation which had often charmed me in the House of Commons] I think Ireland would have a good deal of difficulty in recognising them either' [laughing ironically]. He asked me if I thought the Irish Tories would hang together: for there had been a foolish rumour at the time of a split in the Tory ranks. I said, 'Yes,' that the Tories and the Nationalists would divide the representation of the country between them. This ended the conversation. It was very short, but I carried away two clear ideas: (1) that Mr. Gladstone's mind was full of Ireland; (2) that he now foresaw the revolution which the Franchise Act of 1884 would make in the Irish representation.

While Mr. Gladstone was thinking out the Irish question, Lord Salisbury did not neglect the subject. At Newport, in Monmouthshire, on October 7, the Prime Minister boldly faced the Home Rule problem. He said:

'The Irish leader has referred to Austria and Hungary. . . . Some notion of Imperial Federation was floating in his mind. . . . In speaking of Imperial Federation, as entirely apart from the Irish question, I wish to guard myself very carefully. I deem it to be one of the questions of the future. . . . But with respect to Ireland, I am bound to say that I have never seen any plan or suggestion which gives me, at present, the slightest ground for anticipating

that in that direction we shall find any substantial solution of the problem.'

Here certainly there was no promise of Home Rule, yet the passage excited much comment in Whig, Tory, and Nationalist circles. Lord Salisbury knew what Parnell had demanded—an Irish Parliament; the 'name and fact.' Yet he did not pooh-pooh the proposition. He did not, like Mr. Chamberlain, put down his foot and cry *non possumus*. On the contrary, he showed a willingness to argue the point; he was conciliatory, he was respectful—a remarkable departure from his usual style in dealing with political opponents and disagreeable topics. The Newport speech was in truth a counter move to the Hawarden manifesto. 'I promise you,' Parnell had said some weeks previously, 'that you will see the Whigs and Tories vieing with each other to settle this Irish question.' So far, however, he made no public comment either on the Hawarden manifesto or the Newport speech. He waited for further developments. Meanwhile everything was going precisely as he wished. Whigs and Tories were bidding against each other for his patronage. He was master of the situation. On October 12 the most important pronouncement hitherto made on the Irish question was delivered by Mr. Childers, the friend and confidant of Mr. Gladstone, at Pontefract. He was the first English politician who had courage to grapple with details. He was ready, he said, to give Ireland a large measure of local self-government. He would leave her to legislate for herself, reserving Imperial rights over foreign policy, military organisation, external trade (including customs duties), the post office, the currency, the national debt, and the court of ultimate appeal. Mr. Childers by himself did not carry much weight, but it

was generally supposed that he represented Mr. Gladstone. 'This,' said Sir Gavan Duffy, 'is the voice of Childers, but the hand of Gladstone;' and what Sir Gavan Duffy said, Parnell felt. He had 'played' the Tories up to this point. He now resolved 'to play' Mr. Gladstone.

On October 30 he stated to a reporter of the 'New York Herald,' for the benefit of his American allies, that while no English statesman 'had absolutely shut the door against the concession of a very large measure of legislative independence to Ireland,' Mr. Gladstone had made strides in that direction.

'In his great and eloquent appeal to public men to refrain from any act or word which might further embitter the Irish difficulty, or render full and calm consideration more difficult, he administered a rebuke to the Radical section of his following, who, in fear that an Irish Parliament might protect some Irish industries, were commencing to raise a shrill alarm on this score. Mr. Gladstone's declaration that legislative control over her own affairs might be granted to Ireland, reserving to the Imperial Parliament such powers as would insure the maintenance of the supremacy of the Crown and of the unity of the Empire, is in my judgment the most remarkable declaration upon this question ever uttered by an English statesman. It is a declaration which, if agreement as to details could be secured, would, I believe, be carefully considered by those of my countrymen at home and abroad who have hitherto desired the separation of Ireland from England by any and every means, because they have despaired of elevating the condition of their country, or of assuaging the misery of our people, so long as any vestige of English rule is permitted to remain.'

'Why do you not give guarantees,' the reporter asked, 'that legislative independence will not be used to bring about separation?'

Parnell answered with characteristic directness, honesty, and courage: 'I refuse to give guarantees because I have none of any value to give. If I were to offer guarantees I should at once be told they are worthless. I can reason only by analogy, and point to what has happened in our time in the relation of other States placed in similar circumstances to England and Ireland, but cannot guarantee absolutely what will happen if our claims are conceded. I have no mandate from the Irish people to dictate a course of action to those who may succeed us. When the Irish Parliament has been conceded, England will have a guarantee against separation in the presence of her army, navy, and militia, and in her occupation of fortresses and other strong places in the country; but she will have far better guarantees, in my opinion, in the knowledge of the Irish people that it is in their power by constitutional means to make the laws which they are called upon to obey just and equitable.'

On November 9 Mr. Gladstone set out on his second Midlothian campaign. That night he made two apparently contradictory statements on the Irish question at Edinburgh. He said:

1. 'What Ireland may deliberately and constitutionally demand, unless it infringes the principle connected with the honourable maintenance of the unity of the Empire, will be a demand that we are bound at any rate to treat with careful attention. . . . To stint Ireland in power which may be necessary or desirable for the management of matters purely Irish would be a great error, and if she were so stinted, the end that any

such measure might contemplate could not be attained.'

2. 'Apart from the terms Whig and Tory, there is one thing I will say, and will endeavour to impress upon you, and it is this—it will be a vital danger to the country and the Empire if at a time when the demand of Ireland for large powers of self-government is to be dealt with there is not in Parliament a party totally independent of the Irish vote.'

The first of these statements—so everyone said—meant Home Rule; the second might have meant anything but Home Rule.

On November 10 Parnell addressed a great meeting at Liverpool. Brushing aside the second of Mr. Gladstone's statements, he fastened at once on the first, and tried to coax the Liberal leader still further forward in the direction of Home Rule:

'Although in many respects vague and unsatisfactory, the Edinburgh speech was,' he declared, 'the most important announcement upon the Irish national question which had ever been delivered by any English Minister,' and he complimented Mr. Gladstone 'on approaching the subject of Irish autonomy with that breadth of statesmanship for which he was renowned.' Still he could not help reminding the Liberal leader that until the Irish question was disposed of it would be impossible for any English question to proceed. He concluded by inviting Mr. Gladstone to frame a constitution for Ireland, 'subject to the conditions and limitations for which he had stipulated regarding the supremacy of the Crown and the maintenance of the unity of the Empire.'

But Mr. Gladstone was not to be coaxed. He replied to Mr. Parnell's invitation on November 17, at

West Calder, in a bantering tone, saying that it was not for him to usurp the functions of a Government. Ministers had kept their counsel on the Irish question. He could not intervene when Ministers were silent. Moreover, he told Parnell that until Ireland had declared her wishes at the polls nothing could be done. Parnell regarded this speech as simply trifling with the issue. He had tried the *suaviter in modo*, he would now try the *fortiter in re*. Two days after the West Calder speech he authorised the publication of a furious manifesto by the National League of Great Britain denouncing the Liberal party as the embodiment of all that was infamous and base. The Irish electors of Great Britain were called on to vote against 'the men who coerced Ireland, deluged Egypt with blood, menaced religious liberty in the school, the freedom of speech in Parliament, and promise to the country generally a repetition of the crimes and follies of the last Liberal Administration.' [1]

War to the knife was now declared between the Liberals and the Irish, and the fight began in earnest. 'Ireland,' said Parnell, 'has been knocking at the English door long enough with kid gloves. I tell the English people to beware, and be wise in time. Ireland will soon throw off the kid gloves, and she will knock with a mailed hand.' Behind Parnell was a thoroughly united Ireland at home and abroad. In military parlance the formation of his army may be described thus: in the centre the Parliamentarians; left wing, the Clan-na-Gael, and many of the rank and file of the I. R. B.; right wing, the Catholic Church. With these forces, naturally antagonistic, but held together by the attractive personality and iron will of a great com-

[1] The manifesto appeared November 21.

mander, Parnell swept Ireland from end to end. In Munster, Leinster, and Connaught, every county, every borough, was carried by Nationalists. Half Ulster was captured, and even the maiden city of Londonderry and one of the divisions of Orange Belfast fell before the fiery onset of the rebels. The north-east corner of Ulster and Dublin University alone remained in the hands of the 'Loyalists.' Out of a total of 103 Irish members, 85 Home Rulers and 18 Tories were returned. The Whigs were eliminated. In Great Britain the Liberals were confronted in many important centres by the Irish enemy. Liberal majorities were pulled down, Liberal candidates were beaten, and one Nationalist was returned by the Irish vote. 'But for the Nationalist vote,' said the 'Manchester Guardian,' 'the Liberals would have gone back to Parliament with more than their old numbers.' As it was the Liberals went back to Parliament with a majority of 86 over their Tory opponents, thus:

Liberals	335
Tories	249
Liberal majority over the Tories .	86

But Parnell held the balance. By throwing his 86 men upon the side of the Tories he could neutralise the Liberal majority. Whereas by supporting the Liberals he could enable Mr. Gladstone to form a Government with a working majority of 172. Thus the Irish leader was master of the situation.

CHAPTER XIX

HOME RULE BILL OF 1886

In the winter of 1885 Parnell had perhaps reached the height of his unpopularity in England. He had thrust himself into English politics, compromising the Tories and baffling the Whigs. The one party had sacrificed principles to court his alliance, the other had sacrificed his alliance to assert principles inconsistent with the Liberal faith. The former had gone to the country with the cry of 'no coercion' inscribed upon their flag. The latter had gone to the country with the stigma of coercion impressed upon their character. Both had lost. With Parnell's support the Tories could meet the House of Commons on equal terms. Without his support the Whigs could not form a Government.

'Until the Irish question is disposed of,' Parnell had said at Liverpool on November 10, 'it will be utterly impossible for any English question to proceed.' He had kept his word. English parties were reduced to a state of impotence. English questions were brushed aside. Ireland held the field.

An amusing incident, significant of English feeling, occurred some time after the General Election, when Parnell was on his way to London. A stranger, an Englishman from South Africa, accosted him on board

the mail packet. After some preliminary remarks, this gentleman plunged into politics and sharply criticised Parnell's hostile attitude to the British people. Parnell tried to shake off his tormentor, but in vain. On reaching Holyhead he quickly disembarked and shut himself in a first-class carriage, hoping to escape his troublesome companion. However, as the train was moving out of the station the door was pulled open and the Afrikander jumped in. For a while Parnell resigned himself to the situation with characteristic *sang froid* and patience. The Afrikander resumed his discourse, vigorously denouncing the Irish rebels.

Suddenly Parnell thrust his hand into his trousers pocket and took out several bits of ore. Stretching his open palm towards the stranger, he said: 'Look at that.' 'By Jove, sir, iron pyrites, I'm d——d,' was the response. The stranger was right; they were iron pyrites. Parnell guessed that the Afrikander knew something of mining operations, and resolved to make a diversion by showing him the iron pyrites picked up on Avondale. The movement was completely successful. The Afrikander dropped politics at once, and talked about mining until the Irish leader fell into a gentle slumber.

Lord Salisbury, Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Gladstone, were now brought face to face with the Irish question.

Lord Salisbury's course was clear. The Irish were no longer of any use to him, and he accordingly threw them over. Parnell's relations with the Tories did not survive the General Election. What Lord Salisbury might have done could he have formed a Government with Parnell's help must remain a matter of

conjecture. But an alliance without a *quid pro quo* was impossible.

On learning from Mr. McCarthy that there was no longer any chance of the Tories touching Home Rule, he wrote:

Parnell to Mr. Justin McCarthy

'London: December 17, 1885.

'My dear McCarthy,—I thank you very much for the information contained in your note; it coincides very much with the impressions I have been able to form. I think, however, that the Conservatives in shrinking from dealing with the question, in addition to bringing about the speedy destruction of their party, are little regardful of the interests of the Irish land-owning class, since they might have obtained guarantees, guarantees which the Liberals, who I am convinced will shortly deal with the question, will have no interest in insisting upon.

'Yours very truly,

'Chas. S. Parnell.'

After the election, as before, Mr. Chamberlain was against Home Rule, but in favour of a large measure of local government. He would give the Irish the fullest powers for administering their own affairs, but he would not consent to the creation of any legislative body.

It has been said that it was the result of the General Election which made Mr. Gladstone first think of Home Rule. This statement is clearly inaccurate. I have already shown that Mr. Gladstone was thinking of Home Rule in August 1885, and I am obliged to import

myself again into the narrative in order to finish this part of the story.

A few days before Mr. Gladstone left Hawarden for Midlothian I received a letter from the publicist whom I have already mentioned saying, 'When can we have a talk about your second article? Would to-morrow (November 5) suit you?' I called on the morrow. 'Now,' he said, 'I think the time has come to have an article on Home Rule. What I should like you to tell me is, not what you think would be the best system, but what Mr. Parnell would accept. We want to get Mr. Parnell's mind on paper.' I then stated the points on which I thought Parnell would insist, and the points on which he would be prepared to accept a compromise or to give way:

1. There must be an Irish Parliament and an Irish Executive for the management of Irish affairs. No system of local government would do. It was not local, but national government which the Irish people wanted.

2. Parnell would not stand out upon the question whether there should be one or two Chambers. He would be quite willing to follow Mr. Gladstone's lead on that point.

3. Neither would he stand out on the question whether the Irish members should remain in the Imperial Parliament or be excluded from it. The Catholic Church would certainly be in favour of their retention, in order that Catholic interests might be represented, but the bulk of the Irish Nationalists would not really care one way or the other. The chances are that if they were retained they would rarely attend.

4. What should be Irish and what Imperial affairs? This really was the crux of the whole scheme.

(*a*) Irish affairs: Irish affairs should include land, education, law and justice, police, customs.

Publicist. 'Are you sure about the police?'

'Certainly. Parnell would insist upon the police. If you refused he would make the refusal a *casus belli*. I have no doubt about that.'

Publicist. 'Well, customs?'

'Parnell would certainly like the customs. He wants protection for Irish industries, for a time at all events.'

Publicist. 'Well, he won't get it. That much is perfectly clear. We won't give him the customs. Would he make the refusal a *casus belli*?'

'No; if you give him land, education, law and justice, and police, he would be satisfied; but these things are vital. He would, however, make a fight for the customs, I think.'

(*b*) Imperial affairs: Imperial affairs should include foreign policy (peace or war), the army and navy, the Crown, the currency, and the post office.

'The Irish would not trouble themselves much about Imperial affairs. What they want is to have the building up of their own nation in their own hands. Give them an Irish Parliament with full power for the government of Ireland, and they would let the British run the Empire.'

It was finally arranged that I should write an article on these lines. I sent in the 'copy' about November 20, but the article did not appear until January following. It was then published under the title: 'A Federal Union with Ireland.'

Early in December Mr. Gladstone returned to Hawarden. Some time afterwards a communication sanctioned by him was sent to a leading Liberal. It

contained the momentous statement that he was willing to establish a Parliament in Ireland. No details were discussed, but the principle of Home Rule was conceded.

The Liberal in question, though allowed to make free use of this startling intelligence, kept it for awhile to himself. 'Has Lord Hartington been consulted?' was his first question. 'No,' was the answer of Mr. Gladstone's agent, 'but Lord Spencer and Mr. Robert Hamilton (the Irish Under-Secretary) are thoroughly in favour of Home Rule.' 'Lord Spencer and Mr. Hamilton,' rejoined the Liberal, 'are very good, but if Lord Hartington does not throw in his lot with Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Gladstone will be beaten.' 'What about Mr. Morley?' 'We are not sure about John Morley,' was the reply. 'He is now with Mr. Chamberlain, at Birmingham, and Chamberlain is, we hear, preparing a scheme of local government. Whether Morley will go for local government or Home Rule we do not know.'

A day later the Liberal in question was dining at the Reform Club, when Mr. Morley, who had just returned from Birmingham, entered the room. 'What is the news?' asked Mr. Morley. 'What is *your* news?' said the Liberal; 'I hear you have been at Highbury. What is the news there?' Mr. Morley said that he and Chamberlain had differed. 'Well, then, read that,' said the Liberal, producing the Hawarden pronunciamento. 'Is this authentic?' exclaimed Mr. Morley, with an air of astonishment, on reading the document. 'Authentic enough,' was the reply. 'Then,' added Mr. Morley, 'if this be true I will break with Chamberlain and join Mr. Gladstone.' Next day the Liberal told Mr. Gladstone's right-hand man in the business that 'John Morley was all right'; whereupon

the right-hand man exclaimed joyously, 'Hurrah! we were afraid Morley might not join us.'

That evening an 'inspired' paragraph announcing Mr. Gladstone's adhesion to Home Rule was given to Mr. Dawson Rogers, the manager of the National Press Agency. Similar paragraphs—coming, however, from independent sources—were sent to the 'Leeds Mercury' and the 'Standard.' On December 16 the fluttered dove-cotes of the Liberal party knew the worst. 'Mr. Gladstone,' wrote the 'Leeds Mercury,' 'recognises that there is no use in proposing a scheme [for the settlement of the Irish question] which has not some element of stability and permanence. The plan, therefore, which he has in view provides for the establishment of a Parliament in Dublin for dealing with purely Irish affairs.'

Of course Mr. Gladstone was called on to 'explain.' He did explain, through the Central News Agency, thus: 'The statement is not an accurate representation of my views, but is, I presume, a speculation upon them. It is not published with my knowledge or authority; nor is any other, beyond my own public declarations.'

Obviously this 'explanation' did not reassure the public mind. On the contrary, the Liberal dove-cotes were more fluttered than ever.

To do Mr. Gladstone justice, he desired at this crisis to consider the Irish question without any reference to party tactics. Chancing about the middle of December to meet Mr. Arthur Balfour at the Duke of Westminster's, he said to the brilliant young Tory that if Lord Salisbury wished to deal with the Irish demand no obstacles ought to be thrown in his way; that, in fact, both parties should combine to consider

the question of Irish government in a just and liberal spirit. This wise and generous suggestion met with no response from the Prime Minister, who had, indeed, now made up his mind not to touch the Irish question on any account.

On January 12, 1886, Parliament met. An English Radical was deputed by one of Mr. Gladstone's friends to sound Parnell on the situation; to see how much, or how little, he would take. This Radical was authorised to show a copy of the Hawarden pronunciamento to the Irish leader, but enjoined not to part with it. 'I showed him the paper,' said the Radical, 'one evening in the House of Commons. He glanced hurriedly over it, then coolly folded it and put it into his pocket. "Oh," I said, "you cannot do that. I have been told not to let the paper out of my hand." "Do you suppose," replied Parnell, "that I can give you an answer now on so serious a matter. I must take this paper away, and read it carefully. Then I shall be able to tell you what I think." So saying he buttoned up his coat and walked off. Some days later he saw the Radical again, and said that if Mr. Gladstone brought in a Bill upon the lines foreshadowed in the paper, which was really a forecast of the Home Rule Bill of 1886, the Irish would support it.'

On January 26 the Government declared war against Parnell. Lord Randolph Churchill announced in the House of Commons that a Bill would immediately be introduced to suppress the Land League. The Irish alliance was no longer of any use, and Ministers made a virtue of necessity and repudiated it. 'I will only say,' exclaimed Parnell a year later, 'that history will not record a more disgraceful and unscrupulous *volte-face* than that executed by the Tory party when they

found that our vote was not numerous enough to keep them in office.' Before the end of the month the Tory Government was no more. Mr. Jesse Collings moved an amendment to the Address, expressing regret that the Government had announced no measure enabling agricultural labourers to obtain allotments and small holdings on 'equitable terms as to rent and security of tenure.' The Irish members voted solid for the amendment, and the Government were beaten by 331 to 252 votes. Lord Salisbury resigned immediately, and on February 1 Mr. Gladstone once more became Prime Minister.

He immediately set to work on the Home Rule Bill, the principle of which was the establishment of an Irish Parliament and an Irish Executive for the management of Irish affairs. He consulted no one. He did not take the Cabinet as a whole into his confidence. He evolved the measure out of his inner consciousness. He occasionally spoke to one or two friends, notably Mr. John Morley (Irish Secretary) and Lord Spencer, who were in complete agreement with him on the subject; but he avoided the critics. *The* critic of the Cabinet was Mr. Chamberlain (President of the Local Government Board). From the outset the relations between him and Mr. Gladstone were strained. There seems at this time to have been a personal antipathy between the men. There certainly was no personal sympathy, and to this fact may in some measure be ascribed the defeat of the Home Rule scheme of 1886. 'Gladstone *plus* Chamberlain can carry Home Rule,' Sir Gavan Duffy said to me when rumours were afloat of disunion in the Cabinet, 'but Gladstone *minus* Chamberlain cannot; and what will become of Gladstone if Chamberlain and Hartington combine against him?' Mr.

Chamberlain did not enter the Cabinet as a Home Ruler. He accepted office really to see if a *modus vivendi* between himself and the Prime Minister was possible. Mr. Gladstone was now bent on establishing a Parliament in Ireland. Mr. Chamberlain was still only a local government reformer—though, it must be allowed, a local government reformer on a large scale. Here at once was a difference of principle between the Prime Minister and the President of the Local Government Board. There was also a difference of detail, which, as it seemed to Irish Nationalists, at all events, assumed a magnitude of importance out of proportion to its merits. Mr. Gladstone proposed to exclude the Irish members from the Imperial Parliament. Mr. Chamberlain insisted on their retention. Parnell would certainly have preferred the exclusion of the Irish members. Such an arrangement would in a very marked way have given the Irish Parliament a distinct and independent character, which Irishmen above all things desired. Yet he would not have made the point a *casus belli*. So long as a Parliament and an Executive for the management of Irish affairs generally, subject to certain Imperial reservations, were established he would have been content. To him the question of retention or exclusion was a question of detail—important no doubt, but still detail.

With Mr. Chamberlain the case was different; to him it was a question of principle, and for the reason that he was not a Home Ruler at all. He had his own scheme of provincial councils always at the back, if not always at the front, of his mind. His real object was to out-manœuvre Mr. Gladstone by substituting local government for Home Rule. If he could succeed in persuading Mr. Gladstone to retain the Irish members,

in their full numbers and for all purposes, in the Imperial Parliament, at the same time establishing a body in Dublin for the transaction of certain specified business, and even for the making of certain specified laws, then, no matter what that body might be called, it would in reality be nothing more nor less at the utmost than a sort of glorified county council. If, on the other hand, the Irish members were excluded altogether, and if the new body were given legislative and executive powers generally, reserving certain subjects for Imperial control, then an Irish Parliament—and practically an independent Irish Parliament, as independent as any colonial Legislature—would beyond all doubt be set up. Hence it came to pass that this question of the exclusion or retention of the Irish members became the crux of the whole scheme. Mr. Chamberlain insisted on it, because he hoped by these tactics to turn Mr. Gladstone's flank, and to convert the Home Rule Bill into a Local Government Bill. But the old parliamentary hand was far too wary to allow his central position to be taken in this way. 'I have drawn this clause,' he said to one who was trying to smooth over the differences between himself and Mr. Chamberlain. 'It is the best I can do. Let Mr. Chamberlain draw a clause for the retention of the Irish members, then we shall be in a position to consider both clauses.' This message was conveyed to Mr. Chamberlain, who shook his head despairingly.

While negotiations were in train between Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Chamberlain on the subject of the retention of the Irish members, a cloud, no bigger than a man's hand but full of mischief, appeared upon the political horizon in Ireland. At the General Election Mr. T. P. O'Connor had been returned for the borough

of Galway and the Scotland division of Liverpool. He elected to sit for Liverpool, and it thus became necessary to choose a new candidate for Galway. Parnell consulted Mr. O'Connor on the subject. 'Do the Galway people,' he asked, 'want a local man?' 'No,' said Mr. O'Connor, 'they do not care; they will accept anyone you propose.' 'Very well. I will propose Captain O'Shea,' said Parnell. The story goes that Mr. T. P. O'Connor had a candidate of his own—not a local man. Having satisfied Parnell that the people of Galway had no predilection on the subject, he naturally felt that the Chief's next question would be, 'Well, whom do you suggest?' when he could have proposed his own nominee.[1] The Chief was a man of surprises. He wished to learn the state of local feeling from Mr. O'Connor; for the rest he had his own plans. Hastening, somewhat surprised and disappointed, from the presence of his leader, Mr. O'Connor went to the Hôtel Métropole, where Mr. Biggar was staying. He told the news to 'Joe,' as the member for Cavan was familiarly called by his friends. 'What!' said Joe—and no one who has not heard Mr. Biggar say *what* can have the most remote idea of how the human voice may perform on that simple word.

'*What!* O'Shea! D——d Whig! He won't sit for Galway, sir; d——d nonsense, sir. I'll go to Ireland at once. I'll stop it; d——d Whig.' Mr. O'Connor's next step was to wire to Mr. Healy, on whom he knew he could rely to make a stand against O'Shea. His third step was to accompany Mr. Biggar to Ireland. If, thought Mr. O'Connor, we can only rouse Galway before O'Shea's candidature is publicly announced, the situa-

[1] Mr. O'Connor's choice was, I believe, the late Mr. Quin, afterwards member for Kilkenny.

tion may be saved. On reaching the Irish capital Mr. O'Connor 'rushed,' as he tells us, to get a copy of the 'Freeman's Journal.' Opening the paper, the first thing which met his eye was the 'fateful announcement' that Parnell had selected Captain O'Shea to sit for Galway.

This statement knocked Mr. O'Connor completely 'out of time.' He now knew that he would have to fight Parnell if he opposed O'Shea, and he was scarcely prepared for that operation. But Biggar did not care a jot. Parnell or no Parnell, he was resolved that O'Shea should not be elected. Mr. Healy was seen immediately. He was full of fight, and determined to stick to Biggar through thick and thin. The majority of the Irish members then in Dublin were, however, unwilling to question Parnell's authority. O'Shea, they said, was certainly an undesirable candidate, but it would be more undesirable to oppose Parnell than to accept his nominee. Mr. O'Connor wavered, but Biggar and Healy said, 'We don't care; we will go to Galway. We will oppose O'Shea whatever happens.' They asked Mr. O'Connor to accompany them, but he preferred for the present to remain in Dublin. Speaking of the matter afterwards, Biggar said, 'I took a return ticket to Dublin and went to Galway. T. P. took a return ticket to Galway and stopped in Dublin.' Biggar and Healy soon roused Galway. A local man—Mr. Lynch—was selected to oppose O'Shea, and the people rallied to their own townsman. Biggar threw himself fiercely into the fight. He did not mince his words in denouncing the candidature of O'Shea; he did not spare Parnell. He told the electors of Galway bluntly and openly that Parnell had chosen O'Shea because O'Shea's wife

was Parnell's mistress. He did not even stop there. He sent a telegram to Parnell in these words: 'Mrs. O'Shea will be your ruin.' Healy saw the telegram and changed its form thus: 'The O'Sheas will be your ruin.' A graver crisis had not arisen during Parnell's leadership than this Galway election. Parnell could defy any man on a political issue, for he was literally an absolutist ruler of his people. But here was a moral issue, which, if pushed to the uttermost, must end in disaster. Biggar's speeches—the first public announcement made of Parnell's unfortunate relationship with Mrs. O'Shea—were suppressed by the 'Freeman's Journal,' but the Irish members knew by private advices that he had set the heather on fire in Galway. They wired to Parnell to hasten from London to the scene of action. Parnell did not answer their telegrams. He was never in a hurry. He had the patience, the reserve, of the strong, self-confident man. He never would move when other persons thought he should move. He moved when in his own opinion the time for action had come. If Mr. O'Connor had told him the people of Galway wished to have a local man, the probability is that Captain O'Shea would never have been nominated. Now, however, that his candidature had been publicly announced retreat was impossible. Parnell never looked back when he had once put his hand to the plough.

On the morning of February 9 he arrived in Dublin. He summoned Mr. O'Connor to his side at once. 'I am going straight on to Galway,' he said, 'by the next train, and I want you to come with me.' The situation, serious enough in its main aspects, was not without a touch of humour. Mr. T. P. O'Connor had come to Ireland to oppose Captain O'Shea. He now suddenly

found himself travelling by express train to support the candidature of that obnoxious individual. Parnell was also accompanied by Mr. Sexton, Mr. Campbell, and Mr. J. J. O'Kelly. Biggar was enjoying a hearty breakfast when the news reached Galway that Parnell was *en route* for the city of the Tribes.

'What will we do with Parnell?' asked Mr. Healy. 'Mob him, sir,' said Mr. Biggar, 'mob him.' Long before the train bearing the Chief and his staff arrived an angry multitude had gathered at the railway station. Parnell's visits to the provinces in Ireland were generally like the progress of a sovereign enthroned in the hearts of the nation. Everywhere he was received with reverence, joy, enthusiasm. But the mob at the Galway railway station on February 9 was forbidding, sullen, fierce. How would they receive the Chief? Would they mob him? The train at length steamed into the terminus. The mob growled... Parnell alighted. The crowd scanned him and his companions closely, but not an angry or a disrespectful word was addressed to the 'uncrowned king.' It was clear, however, that the mob were looking for someone with no friendly intent. The object of their search soon appeared. Then there was a yell of passion, a fierce rush, and Mr. T. P. O'Connor was struck at by the foremost man in the throng and nearly swept off his feet. With the true instinct of Connaught peasants, these Galway electors made their late member responsible in the first degree for what had happened. He should have communicated with them, ascertained their views, advised Parnell of their desire to have a local candidate, and saved them from the indignity of being compelled to accept the detested Whig. Mr. O'Connor had done none of these things. Worse still, he had begun by

joining Biggar and Healy in revolt, and ended by coming to Galway to oppose them and to help in forcing O'Shea upon the constituency. The man to be mobbed was not Parnell, but their late member; so thought the men of Galway. Seeing Mr. O'Connor assailed, Parnell sprang to his side in an instant, seized him by the arm and marched him off to the hotel—the mob falling back under the spell of the Chief's resistless influence. Parnell went directly to his room, made a careful toilet, and then came down spick and span, looking more regal than ever, to meet Mr. Biggar and Mr. Healy and the Irish members. Healy stated the case against Captain O'Shea. His observations may be summed up in a sentence: O'Shea was a Whig, and therefore unfit to sit for any Irish constituency. Biggar stood by the while, smiling pleasantly. The member for Cavan never looked more peaceful than when bent on war. Parnell listened patiently and attentively, and then said his say briefly and resolutely. O'Shea could not be withdrawn; it might be a question whether he ought to have been brought forward, but having been brought forward he must remain. Parnell's leadership was involved in the issue, and upon that leadership the success of the Irish cause depended. It must not therefore be jeopardised even by the suspicion of a revolt. That was the fiat of the Chief. 'A rumour has been spread,' he said, 'that if Captain O'Shea is withdrawn I would retire from the party. I have no intention of resigning my position. I would not resign it if the people of Galway were to kick me through the streets to-day.' This single sentence, Mr. O'Connor tells us, swept Mr. Healy off his feet. However that may be, the whole business was certainly settled in a shorter time than I now take to tell the story. When

Parnell had concluded, all present, except Biggar, acquiesced readily in his decision. While the conference of the members was going on a vast crowd had collected in the streets impatiently awaiting the word which would rid Galway of O'Shea. Then the news spread that everything had been settled—that O'Shea was to be member for Galway. This was followed by the further intelligence that Parnell would address the people. A great meeting was gathered together. Parnell faced the sullen and dissatisfied crowd. He had, according to Mr. O'Connor, swept Mr. Healy off his feet with a single sentence. He conquered the multitude with two sentences. Stretching forth his left hand, he said: 'I have a Parliament for Ireland within the hollow of my hand.' Then, bringing his right hand down on his left, he added, 'destroy me and you take away that Parliament.' 'It was an impressive sentence, a revelation,' says Mr. Healy. 'The people learned for the first time how near they were to victory. Every man in the crowd was awed, except Biggar.' The people, who up to that point had shown an unwillingness to hear Parnell, now listened with bated breath. The Chief saw his advantage, and quickly followed it up. 'Reject Captain O'Shea, destroy me, and there will arise a shout from all the enemies of Ireland: "Parnell is beaten, Ireland has no longer a leader."' A thrill of emotion ran through the meeting. There was no cheering, no enthusiasm, but complete submission. Come what might the enemy should not be given the opportunity to blaspheme. They would accept O'Shea rather than it should be said they were disloyal to Parnell. That was the decision of the men of Galway. When all was nearly over, when the people were about to disperse, and as Parnell had risen to

leave, Biggar pushed his way to the front, and in deep guttural tones jerked out the words: 'Sir, if Musther Lynch goes to the poll I'll support him.' Parnell made a gentle inclination of the head in response to this characteristic speech of his old friend and retired. Mr. Lynch went to the poll, but was left at the bottom of it by an overwhelming majority.[1] A grave crisis had been averted, but the Galway election of 1886 threw a dark shadow over the fateful career of the Irish leader.

The election over, Parnell returned to London. The 22nd of March was the day originally fixed for the introduction of the Home Rule Bill. But the differences between Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Chamberlain had not yet been settled. So far, indeed, were the two men from agreement that on March 15 Mr. Chamberlain threatened to resign. Writing to Mr. Gladstone he said:

'I gathered from your statements that although your plans are not fully matured, yet you have come to the conclusion that any extension of local government on exclusive lines, including even the creation of a national council or councils for purely Irish business, would now be entirely inadequate, and that you are convinced of the necessity for conceding a separate legislative assembly for Ireland, with full powers to deal with all Irish affairs. I understood that you would exclude from their competence the control of the army and navy and the direction of foreign and colonial policy, but that you would allow them to arrange their own customs tariff, to have entire control of the civil forces of the country, and even, if they thought fit, to establish

[1] At the General Election Parnell had supported the candidature of Captain O'Shea for the Exchange division of Liverpool.

a volunteer army. It appears to me a proposal of this kind must be regarded as tantamount to a proposal for separation. I think it is even worse, because it would set up an unstable and temporary form of government, which would be a source of perpetual irritation and agitation until the full demands of the Nationalist party were conceded. . . . My public utterances and my conscientious convictions are absolutely opposed to such a policy, and I feel that the differences which have now been disclosed are so vital that I can no longer entertain the hope of being of service in the Government. I must therefore respectfully request you to take the necessary steps for relieving me of the office which I have the honour to hold.'

Mr. Gladstone subsequently made some modifications to conciliate Mr. Chamberlain, but in vain. In fact, there was a radical difference between the Prime Minister and the President of the Local Government Board, which could not be overcome. The one was a Home Ruler and the other was not. The latter suggested alterations in the hope of undermining the principle of the Bill. The former held fast to the principle, and avoided every amendment which in his opinion endangered it. In truth, neither trusted the other, and from the outset both had really assumed a position of mutual antagonism.

On March 26 Mr. Chamberlain finally left the Ministry, and was accompanied by Mr. Jesse Collings (Secretary to the Local Government Board), Mr. Trevelyan (Secretary for Scotland), and Mr. Heneage (Chancellor of the Duchy).

After writing the foregoing I called on Mr. Chamberlain, who was good enough to give me his

views with much frankness and fairness. Though there are some parts of the conversation which carry us a little back, and other parts which rather anticipate the narrative, I prefer to set it out, as a whole, in this place.

I saw Mr. Chamberlain at the Colonial Office on February 15, 1898.

I said: 'Mr. Chamberlain, I know that your relations with Mr. Parnell were friendly in the early days. I think you saw a good deal of each other, and you worked together on some questions. You worked together in attacking flogging in the army.'

Mr. Chamberlain. 'Not quite worked together, if you mean that we worked on a concerted plan or that we had consultations and conferences. We certainly worked for the same end. Parnell attacked flogging in the army in pursuance of his general policy of obstruction. I am not blaming him. He thought the best thing to do for his cause was to obstruct the business of the House of Commons, and he seized every subject which enabled him to carry out that policy. On this general principle he attacked flogging in the army. I was opposed to flogging in the army because I did not like the thing. Some of my friends who were also opposed to it did not wish to take the question up because Parnell had begun it. I thought that was foolish. I said: "What does it matter who has begun it, if it is a right thing to do? Let us help Parnell, whatever may be his objects, when he is doing the right thing. Let us go in and take the question out of his hands." We did ultimately go in and take a prominent part in the discussion. Parnell then dropped back, and let us fight. He came forward again whenever he saw the question was in danger, or whenever any of our people flagged. In that sense, if you like,

Parnell and I worked together in abolishing flogging in the army.'

'Did you think him a remarkable man?'

Mr. Chamberlain. 'Very remarkable. A great man. Unscrupulous, if I may say so. I do not wish to be misunderstood in my meaning of the word "unscrupulous." I mean that he was unscrupulous like every great man. I have often thought Parnell was like Napoleon. He allowed nothing to stand in his way. He stopped at nothing to gain his end. If a man opposed him, he flung him aside and dashed on. He did not care. He did not harbour any enmity. He was too great a man for that. He was indifferent about the means he used to gain his object. That is my view.'

'You say he was unscrupulous. Did you find that he was a man who kept his word?'

Mr. Chamberlain. 'Certainly. He was a pleasant man to deal with in that respect. He was a good man to make a bargain with, and he had a keen eye for a bargain. He was a great Parliamentarian. He understood politics. He knew that you cannot always get your own way, and that you must sometimes take the best thing you can get at a given moment. There was nothing irreconcilable about him. His main purpose he no doubt always had at the back of his mind, but it did not prevent him from dealing with every important issue that arose. He could approach any question—apart from the subject of an Irish Parliament, which I suppose was his main purpose—and deal with that question for the time being as if no other question existed. My relations with Parnell were business relations, and I found them very pleasant. He often dined with me. I should not say that he was socially

interesting. I thought him, indeed, rather dull. He did not seem to have any conversational powers, and he had no small talk. In business he was very frank.'

'You and he made the Kilmainham treaty?'

Mr. Chamberlain. 'Yes. There has been a good deal of discussion about the Kilmainham treaty—about the terms of the treaty, or whether there was any treaty. There was a treaty. And the terms on our side were that we should deal with some phases of the land question—the arrears question, I think. This very Kilmainham treaty is an instance of what I mean when I say that Parnell could divest himself of every subject except the one that was practical at the moment. He did not talk about Home Rule then. He knew it would be useless. He took up a subject which was practicable, and which could be used for the end he then had in view. The Kilmainham treaty was made, the arrears question was taken up, and Parnell got out. That compact would have been carefully kept, and a great change might have been made in affairs in Ireland, but the Phœnix Park murders came and made a difference.'

'The murders led to the Crimes Bill, which was a violation of the treaty?'

Mr. Chamberlain. 'Yes; the murders led to that particular Crimes Bill. Had there been no murders there still would have been some sort of Bill for dealing with outrages. The suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act would have been dropped, but something put in its place.'

'But the Crimes Bill which was passed had been prepared by Lord Cowper and Mr. Forster before they left office?'

Mr. Chamberlain. 'Yes; that is so. But *that* Bill

would not have been introduced if the murders had not been committed.'

'May I ask if Captain O'Shea took any initiative in making the Kilmainham treaty, or was he simply a go-between?'

Mr. Chamberlain. 'He took no initiative. He simply took what I said to Parnell, and brought back what Parnell said to me.'

'Parnell called upon you the morning after the Phœnix Park murders. How did he then seem?'

Mr. Chamberlain. 'Yes; he called; he and Mr. McCarthy. Parnell looked like a man quite broken down—quite unnerved. He said to me: "I would leave public life at once if I were satisfied it would do any good." I said: "Nonsense, Mr. Parnell; you can do no good by leaving public life, you can only do harm. No one supposes you have any responsibility in this matter. If you were to go away, everyone would say it was because you were afraid—because you were mixed up in some way in the matter. You must remain and exercise a restraining influence." I believe, afterwards, he made a communication to Mr. Gladstone on the subject.'

'Did not Captain O'Shea come in while McCarthy and Parnell were with you? Was not something said about the Kilmainham treaty by O'Shea, and did you not say, "O'Shea, it is not your treaty that is going to be carried out at all; it is another treaty"?'

Mr. Chamberlain. 'I have no recollection of that. If anybody has told you so he may be right. It is a long time ago, but I scarcely think it can be accurate. I think there must be some confusion about dates, for I do not think there was any treaty but the one. Later on another treaty was discussed between Parnell and

me, but that was in '84 or '85. I think your informant must be mixing up the dates. In fact, we were so absorbed in the Phœnix Park murders that morning that I do not think we thought of anything else.'

'May I ask what was the other treaty?'

Mr. Chamberlain. 'Certainly. It was, I think, in 1884. Perhaps towards the end or the autumn of 1884. O'Shea came to me. He said: "The Kilmainham treaty has broken down. Do not you think that you and Parnell ought to try and come together again, and to see if it is possible to do anything on the subject of Ireland? I think Parnell is anxious to have some sort of settlement." I said that I was quite willing to consider any proposal relating to the government of Ireland, and to discuss any question with Parnell, to see how far it was possible for us to come together. I should add that my authority in this matter is O'Shea. Parnell was staying at his house at this time, and I think that O'Shea was accurate in saying he had come from Parnell, and that Parnell was anxious for a settlement. However, no letters passed between Parnell and myself in the matter, therefore my evidence on the subject is O'Shea. It was then that I proposed the National Councils scheme. My idea, as well as I can recollect now, was this: There was to be a council in Dublin; possibly it would be necessary to have another council in Belfast, but if possible there was only to be one central council. This council should take over the administrative work of all the boards then existing in Dublin. It might besides deal with such subjects as land and education and other local matters.'

'When you say the council should deal with land and education, do you mean that it should legislate?'

Mr. Chamberlain. 'Not absolutely. I think my idea was that it should take the initiative in introducing Bills, and that it should pass Bills, but that these Bills should not become law until they received the sanction of the Imperial Parliament. If any particular measure was brought in in the council and passed through the council, that measure should then be sent to the House of Commons, and be allowed to lie on the table of the House of Commons for say forty days, and then, if nothing was done upon it, it would become law.'

'That was a bigger scheme than what one ordinarily understands by local government?'

Mr. Chamberlain. 'Certainly, it was a very big scheme. Perhaps it was too big a scheme. I do not think I should agree to it now, but I was ready to give it then. So far as I could learn, Parnell was not opposed to that scheme; here again I have to depend on O'Shea. I remember another thing in this connection which supports O'Shea. About this time Cardinal Manning asked me to call upon him, and talk over the Irish question. I went to see him, and we discussed this National Councils scheme. I asked him if he thought Parnell would accept it, and if it would be satisfactory to the bishops and priests, for I considered that important. He said he was in a position to speak for the bishops, because he had seen some of them passing through on their way to Rome, and that they were in favour of some such scheme as I had proposed. He said, in fact, that he thought the bishops would prefer a National Councils scheme to an independent Parliament. He also said he thought Parnell would accept it. I told Mr. Gladstone all that had happened, and he quite approved of the National Councils scheme. This was in 1884 or early in 1885. Ultimately I

brought the scheme before the Cabinet, that is, the Cabinet of 1884. I cannot, of course, tell you Cabinet secrets, but it is a public matter that I did submit such a scheme to the Cabinet. Mr. Gladstone was quite in favour of it. Well, the Cabinet rejected it.'

'That is, I suppose, the majority of the Cabinet rejected it?'

Mr. Chamberlain. 'Yes, and the very men who afterwards were in favour of a Parliament for Ireland opposed the National Councils scheme most vigorously, and caused its defeat. There never was such a *volte-face*. Mr. Gladstone was very vexed. When that scheme was rejected I did not care how soon the Government went out. We were thrown out in June 1885, and I was very glad. It left me free. Then I took up the Irish question, and I made a speech at some place in the north of London.'

'Holloway?'

Mr. Chamberlain. 'Yes; Holloway.[1] That speech, as you know, excited a good deal of criticism. Well, I still stand by that speech. I attacked the bureaucratic system which existed in Ireland, and I expressed my desire to see it changed. The speech was

[1] This is what Mr. Chamberlain said at Holloway: 'I do not believe that the great majority of Englishmen have the slightest conception of the system under which this free nation attempts to rule the sister country. It is a system which is founded on the bayonets of 30,000 soldiers encamped permanently as in a hostile country. It is a system as completely centralised and bureaucratic as that with which Russia governs Poland, or as that which prevailed in Venice under the Austrian rule. An Irishman at this moment cannot move a step—he cannot lift a finger in any parochial, municipal, or educational work, without being confronted with, interfered with, controlled by an English official, appointed by a foreign Government, and without a shade or shadow of representative authority. I say the time has come to reform altogether the absurd and irritating anachronism which is known as Dublin Castle.'—June 17, 1885.

made in pursuance of the policy of national councils. It was arranged that Sir Charles Dilke and I should go to Ireland, and lay that policy before the people. Then suddenly our plans were overturned. A statement was made to me that Parnell no longer wished us to go to Ireland, and that he would not have our scheme now; that he had got something better. At this time I believe he was in touch with Lord Carnarvon and the Tories.'

'I have heard it said that Mr. Parnell treated you badly over the national councils business. I should like to know your views?'

Mr. Chamberlain. 'I never said he treated me badly. I never thought he treated me badly. I think it is idle to talk of Parnell treating me badly, or of my treating Parnell badly. We acted as politicians. He was doing what he thought the best he could for his cause; I was doing the best I could, according to my opinions. But no doubt his action was quite in keeping with his general practice. He would probably have taken national councils if he could not have got anything better, and he would afterwards, I suppose, have pushed on, or tried to push on, for his Parliament. But it was quite like Parnell to take the thing which was feasible at the moment, and national councils perhaps seemed to him feasible in '85. Then he thought he could get something better, and he was resolved to take it. It was quite natural. I do not think I was badly treated at all. I do not think he treated me badly at all. I have never complained.'

'Parnell had, as you know, Mr. Chamberlain, a very difficult battle to fight. It seems to me that his aim was to see how far English statesmen would go, and that he really desired, if I may say so, to play

you all off against each other, and to close with the man who would, in the end, go farthest.'

Mr. Chamberlain. 'I think that is very likely.'

'Mr. George Fottrell had something to do with the National Councils scheme?'

Mr. Chamberlain. 'Yes, he saw me at that time. He gave me his views, and we talked about the matter generally.'

'Did not Mr. Fottrell write an article in the "Fortnightly" on national councils?'

Mr. Chamberlain. 'Yes, he did.'

'Did you see the proofs of the article?'

Mr. Chamberlain. 'Yes, I did.'

'May I ask if you did not make some suggestions in the proof?'

Mr. Chamberlain. 'Yes, I did.'

I said: 'There is one matter which has puzzled me in considering Parnell's tactics at the moment. It has seemed to me that he ought not to have given you up so soon. You had gone further than any man at the outset. It was natural for him to think that in the end you would be more likely to go the whole way than anybody else. Why did he not keep up negotiations with you? It seems to me he broke them off very suddenly. First he broke them off to deal with Lord Carnarvon, and then he broke them off in dealing with Mr. Gladstone. As a matter of tactics, did he commit a mistake?'

Mr. Chamberlain. 'I do not know that he did. I suppose he came to the conclusion that I could not be got beyond national councils. He thought, rightly or wrongly, that Lord Carnarvon would go further, and then he opened negotiations, or what seemed to be negotiations, with him. I may say that

I think there was a misunderstanding between Lord Carnarvon and Parnell at that time. However, if he thought Lord Carnarvon and the Tories would go further, it was only natural that he should approach them.'

'It seems to me that in the election campaign of '85, and leading up to it, he fixed his eye chiefly upon Mr. Gladstone, you, and Lord Randolph Churchill, and he seems to have come very suddenly to the conclusion that Mr. Gladstone after all was his man. Why could he not have kept up negotiations with you while he was negotiating with Mr. Gladstone? He broke off with you very abruptly, as I think. Was it not a mistake?'

Mr. Chamberlain. 'I assume that Parnell was satisfied that he himself could not get me to go beyond national councils; but he probably thought that Mr. Gladstone might persuade me. I think that was his idea. Then he resolved to lean entirely upon Mr. Gladstone, and he trusted that Mr. Gladstone would carry me over. I cannot say that I see any tactical error on his part in that way.'

'I should now like to talk about the Home Rule Bill. I have come to the conclusion, after giving the matter—your speeches and all that has been written and said upon the subject—the best consideration I could, that you were never a Home Ruler in our sense; but there are some points which I should feel obliged if you would clear up for me. You opposed the exclusion of the Irish members from the Imperial Parliament. I thought at that time, and I think a great many other people thought too, that you were in favour, or that ultimately you came to be in favour, of the principle of Mr. Gladstone's Bill, but that you objected

to the exclusion of the Irish members as a matter of detail. What I should like to ask is, if you objected to the exclusion as a matter of detail, or if you really used that clause for the purpose of attacking the Bill? Was it really your aim to turn Mr. Gladstone's flank by attacking that point?'

Mr. Chamberlain. 'I wanted to kill the Bill.'

'And you used the question of the exclusion of the Irish members for that purpose?'

Mr. Chamberlain. 'I did, and I used the Land Bill for the same purpose. I was not opposed to the reform of the land laws. I was not opposed to land purchase. It was the right way to settle the land question, but there were many things in the Bill to which I was opposed on principle. My main object in attacking it, though, was to kill the Home Rule Bill. As soon as the Land Bill was out of the way[1] I attacked the question of the exclusion of the Irish members. I used that point to show the absurdity of the whole scheme.'

'Well, I may say, Mr. Chamberlain, that that is the conclusion I have myself come to. It was strategy, simply strategy.'

Mr. Chamberlain. 'I wanted to kill the Bill. You may take that all the time.'

'Mr. Jeyes, in his short life of you—which seems to me a very fair as well as a clever book—says you were once on the point of being converted to Home Rule.'

Mr. Chamberlain. 'He is wrong. I was never near being converted to an Irish Parliament. The national councils was my extreme point. There I stood.'

'I should like to talk to you about what you said on the subject of Canadian Home Rule. I am satisfied

[1] Mr. Gladstone introduced a Land Purchase Bill at the same time as the Home Rule Bill, and suddenly dropped it.

that you attacked the exclusion of the Irish members to kill the Bill, but I think you said things about Canada which are open to the interpretation that you might favour the establishment of an Irish Parliament. The matter is not quite clear to me.'

Mr. Chamberlain. 'I do not think you should press me too hard. I stated my object was to kill the Bill. I have no doubt that I said many things that may have been open to some such interpretation as you suggest. I will take this case of Canada, though I really cannot recollect very well now what I did say. Still, I think my idea was this. Other people had been talking about Canadian Home Rule besides me, and the point I took up was, What is meant by Canadian Home Rule? Is it meant that the relations between England and Ireland are to be the same as the relations between the Dominion Parliament and England? If that is meant, then it is separation. Mr. Gladstone himself is not prepared to establish the same relations between England and Ireland as exist between the Dominion Parliament of Canada and the Imperial Parliament. Or do you mean such relations as exist between the Dominion Parliament and the Provincial Parliaments? But what are the relations between the Dominion Parliament and the Provincial Parliaments in Canada? Certain powers are delegated by the Dominion to the provincial legislatures, but that is not what the Bill proposes to do with reference to Ireland. It does not delegate certain powers to Ireland. On the contrary, it gives Ireland power to legislate upon Irish matters generally, reserving certain things to the Imperial Parliament. I think that was the line I took. However open I may be to criticism in whatever I said, my aim was, as I say, to kill the Bill.'

'By the way, there is another point, Mr. Chamberlain, that I had forgotten, which I should like to put to you. Going away from the question of Canada, I find that in '85 Parnell was in touch with Lord Carnarvon through Mr. Justin McCarthy, or directly. He was in touch with you through Captain O'Shea. Was he in communication with Mr. Gladstone at this time, directly or indirectly?'

Mr. Chamberlain. 'Yes. He was in communication with Mr. Gladstone through a lady.'

'Mrs. O'Shea?'

Mr. Chamberlain. 'Yes.'

'Mr. Gladstone has frankly told me that. He told me that he had seen Mrs. O'Shea for the first time in 1882.'

Mr. Chamberlain. 'Yes, he told me the same thing.'

'May I take it that the Cabinet was practically in relation with Parnell through Mrs. O'Shea from 1882?'

Mr. Chamberlain. 'Yes.'

'May I ask a word about the Round Table Conference?'

Mr. Chamberlain. 'Yes.'

'Well, what was it exactly? What were the points raised exactly?'

Mr. Chamberlain. 'I revived my National Councils scheme at the Round Table Conference. I believe they were willing to accept it. They asked Parnell. Parnell would not have it, and that of course made an end in the matter. They thought they could turn him round like Trevelyan, but found they were mistaken.'

On April 8 Mr. Gladstone moved the first reading of the Home Rule Bill. He proposed to establish an

Irish Parliament and an Irish Executive for the management and control of Irish affairs, reserving to the Imperial Parliament the following subjects: the Crown, peace or war, the army, navy, militia, volunteers, defence, &c., foreign and colonial relations, dignities, titles of honour, treason, trade, post office, coinage. Besides these 'exceptions,' the Irish Parliament was forbidden to make any laws respecting (*inter alia*) the endowment of religion, or in restraint of educational freedom, or relating to the customs or excise.

The Dublin metropolitan police were to remain under Imperial control for two years, and the Royal Irish Constabulary for an indefinite period; but eventually all the Irish police were to be handed over to the Irish Parliament. Ireland's contribution to the Imperial revenue was to be in the proportion of one-fifteenth to the whole. All constitutional questions relating to the powers of the Irish Parliament were to be submitted to the Judicial Committee of the English Privy Council. The Irish members were to be excluded from the Imperial Parliament.

The Bill was read a first time without a division, but not without sharp criticism from the Tories and Dissentient Liberals. On April 16 Mr. Gladstone introduced a Land Bill, which was, in fact, a pendant to the Home Rule Bill. The chief feature of this measure was a scheme for buying out the Irish landlords and for creating a peasant proprietary. The State was in the first instance to buy the land at twenty years' purchase of the judicial rents, or at the Government valuation, and then sell to the tenants, advancing the purchase money (which involved the issue of 50,000,000*l.* Consols), and giving them forty-nine years to pay it back

at the rate of four per cent. per annum. A Receiver-General was to be appointed, under British authority, to receive the rents and revenues of Ireland, while this scheme was in operation. Thus Mr. Gladstone's complete plan for the pacification of Ireland was an Irish Parliament and a peasant proprietary.

This plan was now discussed throughout the Empire, approved in the main by the vast majority of the Irish people in Ireland, in America, in the Colonies, accepted by the bulk of the Liberal party; but condemned by the Tories and Dissentient Liberals. Mr. Gladstone had hoped that the Land Bill, by buying off the hostility of the landlords, would smooth the way for the Home Rule Bill.

He was mistaken. The hostility of the landlords was not bought off, while new issues which troubled his own friends were raised. The Irish did not like the appointment of the Receiver-General, and the Liberals did not like the public expenditure which was in the first instance involved. Tactically, the Land Bill was a blunder, and Mr. Gladstone soon found it out.

On May 10 he moved the second reading of the Home Rule Bill. Lord Hartington moved its rejection, and a debate which lasted until June 7 ensued. In the interval Mr. Gladstone tried to win back the Dissentient Liberals. He expressed his willingness to reconsider every detail, if only the principle of the Bill were affirmed. 'Vote for the second reading,' he said in effect; 'consent to the establishment of an Irish Parliament and an Irish Executive for the management and control of Irish affairs, and let the details wait. The second reading pledges you only to an Irish Parliament. Every other question remains open.' As for the Land Bill, he practically threw it over. 'While

the sands are running in the hour-glass,' he said in an oft-quoted sentence, 'the Irish landlords have as yet given no intimation of a desire to accept a proposal framed in a spirit of the utmost allowable regard to their apprehensions and their interests.' If the landlords were not prepared to accept the Bill he would ask no Liberal to vote for it. In this shape he offered the olive-branch to his old friends. Up to May 28 Mr. Bright had taken no very prominent part in opposition to the Ministerial policy, and there were rumours afloat that he was favourable to the Bills.

I was anxious to learn if there was any foundation for these rumours, and I wrote to Mr. Bright, asking him to give me an interview. He quickly sent the following reply:

'Reform Club: May 28, 1886.

'I expect to be here to-morrow from 12 to 2, and shall be glad to see you, if it be not inconvenient for you to call upon me.'

I called at 12.30. He was sitting in the hall of the club talking to Lord Hartington. I took a place opposite to them, and waited for about an hour. At the end of that time Mr. Bright looked at his watch, rose, said something (smiling) to Lord Hartington (who went away), and then walked across the hall to me.

'Well,' he said pleasantly, 'I have kept you waiting for an hour, but I have been talking about Ireland all the time. I came to the club this morning at 10 o'clock, and I have talked of nothing but Ireland since. Come, sit down.'

I went straight to the point. To talk to Mr. Bright and not go straight to the point would be fatal. 'I have

come, Mr. Bright,' I said, 'to ask if you are in favour of the Home Rule Bill.'

He paused for a moment, looked on the floor, then raised his head and answered: 'I am not. Wait (at a motion of my hand). I am against the Land Bill too; I am against both Bills.'

'I am only interested in the Home Rule Bill, Mr. Bright. May I ask you why you are against it? Are you afraid that Home Rule would lead to religious persecution?'

'No; the fact is the days of religious persecution are gone by. You cannot have it anywhere now. We are all watching each other too much. You know my views of the Irish. They are like most other people—neither better nor worse—and you are not going to have a condition of things in Ireland which is impossible anywhere else. Moreover, if the Irish were disposed to persecute, they would have to be on their good behaviour, living so near a Protestant country. Besides, the Protestants of Ireland are very well able to take care of themselves. I would have more concern for some of the poor Catholics. Remember that it is Catholics and not Protestants who have come under the harrow of the League. (A pause.) I think, though, that some of these fellows [the Irish members] are far too fond of talking of Ireland as a Catholic nation. They do harm. (A pause, and then a smile.) I expect that some of these fellows who talk about Ireland as a Catholic nation are precious bad Catholics. They remind me of the Pope's brass band, Keogh and Sadler. I remember those times. You don't. But I have no fear of a religious persecution.'

'Then do you think that we would try to separate from England if we got an Irish Parliament?'

'Certainly not. How could you? Why, the thing is madness. Mark, there are people in this country who would be very glad if you would try. That would give them an opportunity of settling the Irish question very quickly. Just think of our population and of yours; then your population is steadily diminishing, and ours always increasing. Separation is absurd. Whether you have a Parliament or not, you can never separate. (A pause.) I do not know that separation would be a bad thing if you could separate far enough.'

I said, quoting a famous passage from one of Mr. Bright's speeches: 'If we could be moved 2,000 miles to the westward.'

Mr. Bright (smiling). 'Just so. Many of us would be glad to be rid of you; but we have been thrown together by Nature, and so we must remain. (A pause.) The history of the two countries is most melancholy. Here we are at the end of the nineteenth century, and we do not like each other a bit better. You are as rebellious as ever. I sometimes think that you hate us as much as ever.'

I interposed: 'It is a sad commentary, sir, on your government.'

Mr. Bright (warmly). 'I know our government has been as bad as a Government could be, but then we have done many things during the past fifty years. You do not thank us in the least.'

I said: 'Because, as you often pointed out, you have only yielded to force. The Irish tenants do not thank you for the Land Act of 1881. They thank Mr. Parnell and the Land League. Are they wrong?'

Mr. Bright. 'Well, of course I know only too well how much truth there is in what you say about our policy in Ireland. But you do not recognise that there

is an effort now being made in this country to do better by Ireland. If Mr. Gladstone, who has done so much for you, would only persevere on the old lines instead of taking this new step we would yet make everything right in Ireland.'

I remarked: 'Well, sir, I am glad that you think the new step will not lead to separation.'

Mr. Bright. 'Oh, no, I am not afraid of that.'

'Do you think that the present Irish representatives would sit in an Irish Parliament, and that they would adopt a policy of public plunder?'

Mr. Bright. 'Well, I have said to you already that the Irish are very much the same as other people, and no people in the world would stand these fellows permanently. No; if you had an Irish Parliament you would have a better class of men in it. I quite understand that. I do not mean to say that you would have a better representation at once, for these fellows would try to hold on. But the man who is their master would shake them off one by one, and the people would support him. Mr. Parnell is a remarkable man, but a bitter enemy of this country. He would have great difficulties in the first years of an Irish Parliament, but he might overcome them. Yet many of these fellows hate him (smiling). The Irish hate all sort of government. He is a sort of government.'

'A popular government?'

Mr. Bright. 'Well, perhaps so, but even that may not save him in the end. I do not know how long he will be able to control these fellows.'

'Well, Mr. Bright, you are not afraid of a religious persecution, nor separation, nor public plunder. Why do you object to Home Rule?'

Mr. Bright. 'I will tell you. I object to this Bill. It either goes too far or it does not go far enough. If you could persuade me that what you call Home Rule would be a good thing for Ireland, I would still object to this Bill. It does not go far enough. It would lead to friction—to constant friction between the two countries. The Irish Parliament would be constantly struggling to burst the bars of the statutory cage in which it is sought to confine it. Persuade me that Home Rule would be a good thing for Ireland, and I would give you the widest measure possible, consistently with keeping up the connection between the two countries.'

I asked: 'You would give us control of the land, police, judges?'

Mr. Bright. 'Certainly, I would give you a measure which would make it impossible for the two Parliaments to come into conflict. There is the danger. If you get only a half-hearted measure, you will immediately ask for more. There would be renewed agitation—perhaps an attempt at insurrection—and in the end we should take away your Parliament, and probably make you a Crown colony.'

I said: 'Would you keep the Irish members in Westminster?'

Mr. Bright. 'Certainly not. Why, the best clause in Mr. Gladstone's Bill is the one which excludes them.'

'If you were a Home Ruler, Mr. Bright, you would, in fact, give Ireland Colonial Home Rule?'

Mr. Bright. 'I would give her a measure of Home Rule which should never bring her Parliament into close relation with the British Parliament. She should have control over everything which by the most liberal interpretation could be called Irish. I would either have trust

or distrust. If I had trust, I would trust to the full; if I had distrust, I would do nothing. But this is a halting Bill. If you establish an Irish Parliament, give it plenty of work and plenty of responsibility. Throw the Irish upon themselves. Make them forget England; let their energies be engaged in Irish party warfare; but give no Irish party leader an opportunity of raising an anti-English cry. That is what a good Home Rule Bill ought to do. This Bill does not do it. Why, the Receiver-General appointed by it would alone keep alive the anti-English feeling. If you keep alive that feeling, what is the good of your Home Rule? Mark, I am arguing this matter from your own point of view. But I do not think that Home Rule is necessary. Let us work on the old lines, but work more constantly and more vigorously. We have passed some good land laws. Well, let us pass more if necessary.'

I said: 'But will you?'

Mr. Bright. 'I think so. I think that the English people are now thoroughly aroused to the necessities of Ireland: they are beginning to understand the country, and the old system of delay and injustice will not be renewed. If Mr. Parnell would only apply himself to the removal of the practical grievances of Ireland, there is no "concession," as you call it, which he could not get from the Imperial Parliament. I have said that I am not afraid that Home Rule would lead to separation. We are too strong for that. But I think that there are certain men in Ireland who would make an effort to obtain separation. I mean what you call the Old Fenians. I saw a letter from one of those men a few days ago—he does not know I saw it—a very long letter. I was much interested in it. I should like to

know what you are going to do with him. He is an upright, honourable man, ready, I can quite believe, to risk anything for his country. Now, he wants separation, and he wants to obtain it in regular warfare. He is mad, but a madman with a conscience is sometimes dangerous. I should think that he could appea to the young men of the country, young fellows ful of sentiment and enthusiasm—(a pause)—fools; but they might make themselves troublesome to your Irish Parliament. Now, what will you do with ——? Will he be content with an Irish Parliament of any sort?'

'Well, Mr. Bright, I am in a good position to answer that question. I saw —— last night. I asked him if he would accept an Irish Parliament and an Irish Executive which would have the fullest control of Irish affairs—the connection with England, of course, to be preserved.'

Mr. Bright. 'Yes; and what did he say?'

'He said: "I would take an oath of allegiance to an Irish Parliament; I will never take it to an English Parliament. I would enter an Irish Parliament; I would give it a fair trial——"'

Mr. Bright. 'Well, you surprise me. This is certainly a new light. The man is quite honourable. He will do what he says. Well, but does your friend think that you will get a Home Rule Parliament?'

'No; he thinks that we are living in a fool's paradise, and that his turn will come again. Still, I fancy that he is somewhat astonished that an English Prime Minister should introduce any sort of Home Rule.'

Mr. Bright. 'So am I. So far your Old Fenian and I agree.'

We then parted. As I left the club he said: 'Good-bye; I wish I was on your side. I have been on the Irish side all my life, and now at the end of my life I do not like even to appear to be against you; but I cannot vote for this Bill. I have not spoken against it. I do not know that I will speak against it, but (a pause) that is on account of Mr. Gladstone. My personal regard for him may prevent me from taking any part in the discussion.'

He said no more, and I came away. But his opposition to the Bill did not weaken the affectionate regard in which I had ever held him; nor do I cherish his memory the less now because he was not on the Irish side in the memorable struggle of twelve years ago. If he went wrong then, I cannot forget that for the best part of his public life Ireland had no stauncher friend in this country.

Two days after our conversation Mr. Bright declared publicly against Home Rule.

Writing to a friend in Birmingham on May 31 he said: 'My sympathy with Ireland, north and south, compels me to condemn the proposed legislation. I believe a united Parliament can and will be more just to all classes in Ireland than any Parliament that can meet in Dublin under the provisions of Mr. Gladstone's Bill. If Mr. Gladstone's great authority were withdrawn from these Bills,[1] I doubt if twenty persons outside the Irish party would support them. The more I consider them, the more I lament that they have been offered to Parliament and the country.'

While the debate on the second reading was proceeding rumours were afloat that the Government

[1] The Home Rule Bill and the Land Bill.

were ready to 'hang up' the Bill provided the second reading was carried. Parnell strongly opposed these tactics. In May he wrote to a member of the Cabinet saying that such a course could not be taken. The Government must show, he said, that they were in earnest in the business. To hang up the Bill would be to strengthen the position of the extreme men who did not want it, and to weaken the position of the moderate men who did. It would be difficult, he concluded, to persuade the people of Ireland if the Government dropped the Bill that they ever intended to take it up again. In fact, Parnell had got the Liberals into Home Rule, and he meant to pin them to it.

On June 7 the debate on the Home Rule Bill was brought to an end. Parnell reserved himself for that night. He then spoke in a moderate and conciliatory tone, warning the House, however, that the rejection of the Bill would lead to a renewal of turmoil in Ireland. He said: 'During the last five years I know, sir, that there have been very severe and drastic Coercion Bills, but it will require an even severer and more drastic measure of coercion now. You will require all that you have had during the last five years, and more besides. What, sir, has that coercion been? You have had, sir, during those five years—I don't say this to inflame passion—you have had during those five years the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act; you have had a thousand of your Irish fellow-subjects held in prison without specific charge, many of them for long periods of time, some of them for twenty months, without trial, and without any intention of placing them upon trial (I think of all these thousand persons arrested under the Coercion Act of the late Mr. Forster scarcely a dozen were put on their trial); you

have had the Arms Act; you have had the suspension of trial by jury—all during the last five years. You have authorised your police to enter the domicile of a citizen, of your fellow-subject in Ireland, at any hour of the day or night, and search any part of this domicile, even the beds of the women, without warrant. You have fined the innocent for offences committed by the guilty; you have taken power to expel aliens from the country; you have revived the curfew law and the blood money of your Norman conquerors; you have gagged the Press, and seized and suppressed newspapers; you have manufactured new crimes and offences, and applied fresh penalties unknown to your law for these crimes and offences. All this you have done for five years, and all this and much more you will have to do again.

'The provision in the Bill for excluding the Irish members from the Imperial Parliament has been very vehemently objected to, and Mr. Trevelyan has said that there is no half-way house between separation and the maintenance of law and order in Ireland by Imperial authority. I say, with just as much sincerity of belief and just as much experience as the right hon. gentleman, that in my judgment there is no half-way house between the concession of legislative autonomy to Ireland and the disfranchisement of the country, and her Government as a Crown colony. But, sir, I refuse to believe that these evil days must come. I am convinced there are a sufficient number of wise and just members in this House to cause it to disregard appeals made to passion, and to choose the better way of founding peace and goodwill among nations; and when the numbers in the division lobby come to be told, it will also be told for the admiration

of all future generations that England and her Parliament, in this nineteenth century, were wise enough, brave enough, and generous enough to close the strife of centuries, and to give peace and prosperity to suffering Ireland.'

'England and her Parliament' were not 'wise enough,' 'brave enough,' or 'generous enough' to close the 'strife of centuries' by accepting Mr. Gladstone's Bill. It was rejected in a full House by 343 to 313 votes. A Dissolution immediately followed, and in July the three kingdoms were once more in the whirl of a general election. In December 1885 the Liberals had gone to the country denouncing Parnell and the Irish. In July 1886 they went to the country in alliance with Parnell and the Irish. This extraordinary revolution was due to the genius and character of a single man—Mr. Gladstone. Liberals indeed there were—a mere handful—who had given in their adhesion to Home Rule before the conversion of Mr. Gladstone, but the bulk of the Liberal party had yielded to the personal influence and authority of the Liberal leader. Parnell had conquered Mr. Gladstone; Mr. Gladstone conquered the Liberal party.

While the election was pending it occurred to me that in the changed condition of affairs some effort ought to be made to educate the English constituencies. One day Mr. George Meredith had said to me: 'Why is not something done to inform the public mind on Home Rule? I admit the necessity of agitation, but you want something besides. Having blazed on the English lines with the artillery of agitation, you ought now to charge them with the cavalry of facts.' I made my proposal first to Mr. Davitt. He cordially accepted it. 'Parnell,' he said, 'has neglected the English democracy.

I have been at him again and again to do what you now propose, but he would not listen to me. We have friends in this country, and we must help them to help us. I will see Parnell this evening, and do you call upon him to-morrow. He has plenty of money, and he ought to spend some in this way.'

I saw Parnell next day in the Smoking-room of the House of Commons. He looked ill and depressed. I was surprised. There was assuredly, I thought, much to cheer him. The Home Rule Bill had no doubt been rejected. But he had in ten short years done more for the cause of Irish legislative independence than all his predecessors had done in eighty years. He was a victor even in defeat. Still, he looked anything but cheerful, and as we talked he gazed thoughtfully through the window out on the Thames, and his mind seemed to be far away from the stirring scenes around us. 'Yes,' he said, 'Davitt has spoken to me about your plan. He thinks it a very good thing. You propose to form a committee and publish pamphlets. Who are your committee?' I gave him the names. 'Very well,' he said, 'I will try the experiment. I don't believe it will do the good Davitt expects, but I am willing to try it to please him. How much money do you want?' I named a sum. 'I will give you half,' he said. Then, smiling—'I cut down every demand by half. Half is quite enough for an experiment. If it succeeds, then we can do the business on a larger scale. I admit that as Mr. Gladstone has joined us we must have some change of policy. But we cannot persuade the English people. They will only do what we force them to do.' I said: 'Mr. Gladstone can persuade them.' 'Yes,' he answered, 'they will listen to an Englishman. They won't listen to us.'

As I was leaving he said—and the remark showed his thoughtfulness—'I don't want you to be out of pocket in this matter. I will give you the money when you write for it,' which he did promptly.

During the election Parnell addressed meetings at Plymouth and at other places in Great Britain. 'While in the West of England,' says Sir Robert Edgcumbe, 'he stopped with me at Totnes. He said he had, as a boy, lived at Torquay, and that he should much like to revisit it. He drove over to Torquay between lunch and dinner, and when he returned he told me, with some regret, that he had been unable to identify the house in which he had lived. Torquay, too, did not seem to come up to his boyish recollections. For myself, I can honestly say that of all the men I have ever met, Mr. Cecil Rhodes alone equals Mr. Parnell in possessing that peculiarly indefinable quality, the power to lead men—that rare power which induces people to lay aside their own judgment altogether and to place implicit reliance, absolute and unquestioning, in the guidance of another.'

The elections were over before the end of July.

Result.

Tories	316
Dissentient Liberals	78
Unionist total	394
Liberals	191
Irish Nationalists	85
Home Rule total	276

Unionist majority, 118

Mr. Gladstone resigned before the final returns were sent in, and when Parliament met on August 5 Lord Salisbury was Prime Minister. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach was Chief Secretary for Ireland, Lord Londonderry, Viceroy. The second great Home Rule battle had been fought and lost.

Parnell was standing one day in the Lobby after the General Election; Mr. Chamberlain passed. 'There goes the man,' said Parnell, 'who killed the Home Rule Bill.'

The Irish leader thought that Mr. Gladstone had committed a tactical mistake in mixing up land purchase with the question of an Irish Parliament. He had a conversation with Davitt on this subject while Home Rule still hung in the balance.

Parnell. 'The Home Rule Bill will be wrecked by the land purchase scheme. I think it would be better to drop the land scheme altogether.'

Davitt. 'Drop the land —— ! Why, it is vital.'

Parnell. 'I don't think so; furthermore, I think that if we had a Parliament in Ireland it would be wiser to drop the land question.'

Davitt. 'Drop the land question! How on earth could you drop the land question after all we have done during the last seven years?'

Parnell. 'Oh! I don't mean that there shall be no land legislation. There might be an amendment of the Act of 1881 and of the Act of 1885. We should proceed slowly. But there should be no revolutionary changes. No attack upon the land system as a whole.'

Davitt. 'Mr. Parnell! how on earth could you resist attacking the land system, as a whole, after all

your speeches? If you were Irish Secretary in an Irish Parliament, how could you defend yourself in the face of these speeches. What would you do?'

Parnell. 'The first thing I should do would be to lock you up.'

CHAPTER XX

THE NEW PARLIAMENT

One of Parnell's first acts in the new Parliament, despite his desire to concentrate his efforts on the national question, was the introduction of a Land Bill. The Irish tenants, he said, could not pay the judicial rents. There had been a serious fall in prices, and there ought to be a proportionate reduction in rent.

He proposed three things:

'1. The abatement of rents fixed before 1885, provided it could be proved that the tenants were unable to pay the full amount, and were ready to pay half the amount and arrears.

'2. That leaseholders should be admitted to the benefits of the Act of 1881.

'3. That proceedings for the recovery of rent should be suspended on payment of half the rent and arrears.'

But the Government would not hear of the Bill; even many Liberals doubted its necessity; and it was rejected (September 21) by 297 to 202 votes.

Two months afterwards Parnell fell seriously ill. On November 6 he called on Sir Henry Thompson, who has kindly given me some account of the visit. 'Parnell,' said Sir Henry, 'first called on me on November 6, 1886. He did not give his own name. He gave the name of Charles Stewart. Of course I

had often heard of Parnell, but I had never seen him. I had never even seen a photograph of him. When he called he was quite a stranger to me.' (Then, abruptly) : 'Was Parnell an Irishman ?' I replied, 'Yes.' 'I should never have thought it,' resumed Sir Henry; 'he had none of the characteristics of an Irishman. He was cold, reserved, uncommunicative. An Irishman is not uncommunicative. Start him on any subject (with a smile), and he will rattle along pleasantly on many subjects. But Parnell was, I should say, a very silent man. He answered every question I asked him fully and clearly, but he never volunteered information. Often a man will wander from the subject, and feel disposed to be chatty. Parnell kept to the point. He never went outside the business of our interview. He was anxious and nervous about himself, and listened very attentively to my directions. I gave him some directions about diet, as I do to all my patients. He said there was a lady with him in the next room, and that he would be glad if I would give the directions to her. The lady then came in. I really don't remember how Parnell described her. I gave her the directions about dietary. She seemed to be very anxious, and listened carefully. I saw Parnell several times afterwards. Our interviews were always of a strictly professional character. Of course I finally learned who my patient was, and then I put his full name on my books. There it is—Charles Stewart Parnell. He did not strike me as a remarkable man. He said nothing which made any impression on me. I should have taken him, and did take him, for a quiet, modest, dignified, English country gentleman.' The lady who accompanied Parnell to Sir Henry Thompson's was Mrs. O'Shea.

Mrs. O'Shea was the wife of Captain O'Shea, who had practically acted as Mr. Chamberlain's ambassador in negotiating the Kilmainham treaty, and who subsequently became member for Galway.[1] During the General Election of 1880 Captain O'Shea (then a successful candidate for the representation of the County Clare) was introduced to Parnell by The O'Gorman Mahon. Some weeks afterwards Parnell met Mrs. O'Shea for the first time at a dinner party given by her husband at Thomas's Hotel, in Berkeley Square. A friendship, which soon ripened into love, sprang up between them, and from 1881 to 1891 they lived as husband and wife.

The O'Sheas had a house at Eltham. Parnell took quarters near them. Captain O'Shea's suspicions of improper intimacy between Parnell and his wife were aroused so early as 1881.

Coming to Eltham one day—he had chambers in town, where he generally stopped—he found Parnell's portmanteau in the house. He at once flew into a rage with his wife, and sent a challenge to Parnell.

Captain O'Shea to Parnell

'Salisbury Hotel, St. James's: July 13, 1881.

'Sir,—Will you please be so kind as to be at Lille, or at any other town in the north of France which may

[1] 'It seems to me,' I said to Mr. Healy, 'that O'Shea was Chamberlain's ambassador in negotiating the Kilmainham treaty.' 'Certainly,' he replied. 'O'Shea and Chamberlain were very intimate. It was O'Shea who brought me to Chamberlain's house and introduced me to him.' It may be stated that Captain O'Shea followed Mr. Chamberlain rather than Parnell at the parting of the ways over the Home Rule Bill in 1886. He did not vote on the second reading—'he walked out.' Soon afterwards he resigned his seat for Galway and disappeared from political life.

suit your convenience, on Saturday morning, 16th instant. Please let me know by 1 P.M. to-day, so that I may be able to inform you as to the sign of the inn at which I shall stay. I want your answer, in order to lose no time in arranging for a friend to accompany me.'

Captain O'Shea did not receive an immediate answer to this letter, whereupon he wrote again:

'I find that you have not gone abroad; your luggage is at Charing Cross Station.'

Returning from Eltham, he brought Parnell's portmanteau with him to Charing Cross.

Parnell replied:

Parnell to Captain O'Shea

'Westminster Palace Hotel: July 14, 1881.

'SIR,—I had your letter of yesterday, bearing the postmark of to-day. I replied to your previous letter yesterday morning, and sent my reply by a careful messenger to the Salisbury Club. You will find that your surmise that I refuse to go abroad is an incorrect one.'

But there was no duel. Mrs. O'Shea satisfied the Captain that there was nothing wrong, and friendly relations were at once resumed between him and Parnell.

I do not think that it is any part of my duty as Parnell's biographer to enter into the details of his *liaison* with Mrs. O'Shea. I have only to deal with the subject as it affects his public career, and when I have stated that he lived maritally with Mrs. O'Shea I feel that I have done all that may reasonably be expected of me.

I am not going to excuse Parnell, neither shall I sit in judgment on him. He sinned, and he paid the penalty of his sin. For ten years this unfortunate *liaison* hung like a millstone round his neck, and dragged him in the end to the grave. There it lies buried. I shall not root it up.

It has been said—and this is a topic with which I am bound to deal—that Parnell neglected Ireland for Mrs. O'Shea.

I will try to deal with this charge fairly and, I hope, dispassionately, limiting the inquiry at present to the point at which the narrative has now arrived. It is not suggested that Parnell neglected Ireland in 1881 or in 1882 up to the date of his arrest; neither is it suggested that he neglected Ireland from January 1885 until the fall of the Gladstone Ministry in June 1886. The charge, then, covers the period between May 1882 and December 1884.

During this period Parnell did not certainly act with his wonted energy in Irish affairs.

The question is—

1. What were the causes of his comparative inactivity?

2. Did that inactivity amount to neglect of duty, and, if so, to what extent?

1. Many causes conspired to make Parnell inactive between May 1882 and December 1884, and among those causes I am free to say that his entanglement with Mrs. O'Shea must be counted. She threw a spell over him which changed the current of his domestic life and affected the course of his political career. In the old days he was glad to come to Avondale, glad to be among his own people, happy in the company of his sisters, bound up with every family interest.

'Charley,' says John, 'was very fond of Avondale. He used to be here often all alone, but he never minded it. He went about among the people, was always doing something on the property, looking after his mines, and quite happy. He would go on to Aughavanagh to shoot; then some of my sisters would come and stop with him, and he would go out walking or riding and living a pleasant life. Then we noticed a change. He did not come so frequently to Avondale. He spent more time in England.' The rest and solace which he had once found in the old home in the beautiful Wicklow vale he now sought in the new retreat of a London suburb. He loved Mrs. O'Shea, and it would be idle to deny that this passion exercised a distracting and absorbing influence upon him. There were weeks, months, which he would have spent in Ireland, to the immense advantage of the National movement, but for his unfortunate attachment to that unhappy lady. All this I admit frankly and fully. But be it remembered that Mrs. O'Shea was only one of the factors in the case—only one of the causes which conspired to his comparative inactivity during the years under review.

What were the others? Health and public policy. First as to health. There can be no doubt that Parnell's health was impaired during the years '82–84, and his nervous system unstrung.

One evening in 1883 he came into the Dining-room of the House of Commons. He had been at a private meeting, attended by some of his parliamentary colleagues, and by other Nationalists who were not in Parliament. He looked jaded, careworn, ill. Mr. Corbet, one of the members for Wicklow, was dining at a table by himself.

'On coming into the room,' says Mr. Corbet,

'Parnell looked around, and his quick eye soon picked me out. He walked across to my table, and said, "May I dine with you, Corbet?" "My dear Parnell," I replied, "I am only delighted to have you with me." He looked worried, ill, broken down. "Parnell," I said, "is there anything wrong? You look upset." "No," he replied, "I am not very well just now, and things unnerve me. I shall be all right when I have had some dinner." I said, "Parnell, will you let an old friend and neighbour take a liberty with you?" "Certainly, Corbet," he answered; "what is it?"

'"You are not well," I said; "you look tired and worn out. For heaven's sake, fling up everything and go away. The Government cannot do us much harm if you go away for a few months; do take a complete rest. Suppose you break down altogether, what will happen then?" "Oh, I won't break down," he said, quickly pulling himself together; "I'll be all right soon." "But," I urged, "why not go away even for two months? Two months' complete rest, free from all anxiety, would set you up at once." "I cannot go away," he said wearily. "I am not afraid of the Government; they can't do us much harm for a few months, as you say, and I am not going to fight them just at present. I am thinking of our own party. I cannot leave them. I must keep my eye on them and hold them together. But" (brightening up) "I mean to rest, Corbet, I mean to take it easy for a bit. But I cannot go away." Afterwards I heard that he had had an unpleasant meeting—that the men were all at sixes and sevens, and that he had a good deal of trouble in smoothing over difficulties and in making peace. He was always smoothing over difficulties, making peace, and holding us together.'

I do not wish to press this point of health unduly. I desire only to remind my readers that it was a factor in the case. But the dominating factor was, I believe, public policy.

While Parnell was in prison every turbulent spirit in the country had been let loose. The accounts from the west filled him with alarm. Ireland was passing out of his hands, and into the hands of an irresponsible *jacquerie*. His first thought was to leave jail, to crush the *jacquerie*, and to stamp his own authority once more upon the people. He made the Kilmainham treaty, the terms of which, as I have already said, were: (1) that an Arrears Bill should be introduced, (2) that he should slow down the agitation. The Kilmainham treaty might have been wise or unwise. Mr. Healy, the shrewdest man in Irish politics, thought it was wise.

But wise or unwise, Parnell, having made it, was resolved to keep it. 'We have always,' one of the Liberal whips said to me, 'found it difficult to pin Parnell to anything. But when he has made a promise we find that he keeps his word.' Within a few days of his release the Phœnix Park murders were committed. This outrage literally prostrated him. Davitt's description of his appearance and conduct at the Westminster Palace Hotel on Sunday, May 7, 1882, gives one the idea of a man who had gone mad under a shock. He walked frantically up and down the room, flung himself passionately on the sofa, and petulantly cried out: 'I will leave public life. I will not have the responsibility of leading this agitation when I may at any time be stabbed in the back by irresponsible men.' He had lost his habitual self-control. He was completely unnerved.

In favour of peace before the Phœnix Park murders, he was a thousand times more bent upon it afterwards. He was more than ever convinced that Ireland needed a period of repose, and he made up his mind that she should have it. Three causes, then, conspired to make Parnell inactive—public policy, health, and Mrs. O'Shea.

2. I now pass to the next point. Did Parnell's inactivity amount to neglect of duty, and, if so, to what extent?

Having made up his mind to adopt a policy of inactivity, it goes without saying that he himself was bound to be inactive. To have addressed public meetings, to have roused the country, to have inflamed the people, would have been contrary to his aims and a violation of the Kilmainham treaty. His first duty was to keep that treaty, and to see that the Government kept it.

The Government passed an Arrears Bill, and so far kept faith. No doubt they also passed the Crimes Bill, which was practically a violation of the treaty. But the hands of Ministers had been forced by the Phœnix Park murders. Had there been no murders there would have been no Crimes Bill.

In the autumn Mr. Davitt proposed the formation of the National League. Parnell was opposed to the project, for the obvious reason that this move meant fresh agitation, which he did not want. Ultimately he gave way, taking care, however, to superintend the establishment of the new organisation and to thwart the plans of the 'active' men. He did not allow Mr. Davitt to thrust a scheme for nationalisation upon the country; he told Mr. Dillon that the agitation should be 'slowed down,' he bridled Brennan. Finally all three left the country.

The years 1883 and 1884 were dynamite years, and the dynamite epidemic, like the Phœnix Park murders, served only to strengthen his determination to keep Ireland quiet. I have already shown how, wherever his authority was questioned, whenever there was the least sign of a division in the ranks, he appeared in an instant on the spot, to restore order and crush revolt. During these two years and a half he was, if I may say so, active—though probably not active enough—in enforcing a policy of inactivity. At length in January 1885, when, in his opinion, the time for a renewal of hostilities had arrived, he burst brilliantly upon the scene, and splendidly led his men to victory.

To sum up:

1. Parnell was comparatively inactive between 1882 and 1884, chiefly on public grounds, and partly owing to ill-health and to his entanglement with Mrs. O'Shea.

2. His inactivity did not in the main amount to neglect of duty—he never failed in any crisis—though he was frequently absent from Ireland and from the House of Commons when his presence might have been of advantage to the national cause. So far I have dealt with the charge of negligence during the years 1882 and 1884 brought against Parnell. I shall now resume the narrative, and my readers can judge for themselves of his political conduct between 1886 and 1891.

Parnell warned the Government that if the Land Bill were rejected there would be a renewal of turmoil in Ireland. His words were justified by events. In December 1886 the famous Plan of Campaign was launched, and another agrarian war broke out. 'Who

was the author of the Plan of Campaign?' I asked one behind the scenes. He answered: 'William O'Brien. It came about in this way. Parnell really desired peace. He was ill for one thing,[1] for another he wanted to reconsider the whole situation. Gladstone was converted to Home Rule. We now had friends in England. A new condition of things had arisen. How was it to be dealt with? That was one of the problems which Parnell had to face, and he was anxious for breathing-time to look round.

'His Land Bill would have secured peace by preventing the exaction of impossible rents. But the Government would not have it. They soon found out their mistake. They desired peace too. They were anxious to govern without coercion. They wished to be in a position to say: "The Home Rule Bill has been rejected, but Ireland is perfectly quiet. The Liberals could not rule by the ordinary law; we can. Ireland is contented." The excellent intentions of the Government were baffled by their own friends. As the autumn approached the landlords demanded their rents. The tenants asked for reductions. The landlords refused. The tenants held out. Writs of eviction were issued, and Sir Michael Hicks-Beach suddenly saw his hopes of a peaceful Ireland gravely jeopardised. He appealed to the landlords not to insist on their "rights." Sir Redvers Buller, who had been sent to the south on some special mission, supported the Chief Secretary in his efforts to stay the hand of the evictor. But the landlords were implacable. It was at this stage that William O'Brien proposed to take action. The efforts of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach to keep the landlords in check were the talk of the

[1] 'Sick unto death' is Mr. Healy's expression.

country. O'Brien argued that if these efforts succeeded the Liberals would be dished, agitation prevented, and reform staved off. The tenants, he said, should not be allowed to wait the result of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach's operations. They should themselves take the initiative. His original idea was that if the landlords persisted in refusing reductions the tenants should refuse to pay. Funds were to be provided to enable them to stand out, one-third of the money being provided by the local men and two-thirds by the League in Dublin.

'O'Brien tried, in the first instance, to see Parnell and to place the plan before him. But Parnell could not be seen. He was, as I have said, very ill, and nobody could approach him. O'Brien then saw Dillon, who took up the scheme at once. In nine cases out of ten O'Brien was able to lead Dillon. Both of them finally came to me. I proposed an amendment in the original scheme to the effect that the tenant should offer a fair rent; that if the landlords refused it, the money should be banked and the tenant should sit tight. This amendment was accepted and became the basis of the plan. In every district a managing committee was to be elected. The rent was to be banked with the committee, and the committee was to deal with the landlords. If the landlords refused to come to terms, the money should be used to support the tenants in cases of ejectment or sale, and to fight the landlords generally. That roughly was the principle of the Plan of Campaign. There were details dealing with the question of machinery, but I don't think you need trouble about them.'

'Was Parnell,' I asked, 'in favour of the Plan of Campaign?'

'Dead against it,' my friend answered. 'As I

have said, he wanted peace. He wanted time to turn round. In addition, he was altogether against a revival of a land agitation on a large scale. He would not go back to 1879, 1880, 1881. Of course he did not forget the land question. He had brought in his Bill of 1886, and he meant to bring it in again. But he was against setting the country again in a blaze on the land question. He was really thinking more of the national question at this time, and meant to keep the movement on national as opposed to agrarian lines.'

Some time towards the end of 1886 or early in 1887 I met Mr. Campbell, Parnell's secretary, near Charing Cross. The Plan of Campaign had by this time been published in 'United Ireland' and was put in force in the west. Everyone was talking about it. 'Is the Chief in favour of the Plan of Campaign?' I asked Mr. Campbell. He answered, with characteristic Ulster caution: 'I really can't say. I have not seen him for some time. He is very ill. I don't think he has been consulted by these gentlemen.' A short time after this conversation the following circular was issued from the London offices of the Irish parliamentary party: 'Mr. Parnell does not propose to express any opinion as to the "Plan of Campaign" at present, as he is desirous of first going to Ireland and having an opportunity of consulting with the gentlemen responsible for its organisation and working, whom he has not seen since the close of last session. He also wishes for further information than that at present in his possession with regard to various matters before he speaks publicly on the subject. Mr. Parnell was not aware that the Plan of Campaign had been devised or was going to be proposed until he saw it in the newspapers.'

The Plan of Campaign constituted a serious drain

on the financial resources of the League, but kept the ball of agitation rolling. The turmoil which Parnell had anticipated was renewed, the Government were forced to abandon all hope of governing by the ordinary law, a perpetual Coercion Bill [1] was added to the statute-book, and Ministers and agitators stood face to face in a fierce and protracted struggle.

The 'war' lasted throughout the years 1887, 1888, and 1889, and was attended by the usual 'incidents.' Public meetings were suppressed, whole districts proclaimed, popular representatives were flung into jail, juries packed (when, indeed, there was trial by jury at all). Evictions were multiplied, peasants and police were brought into collision, and the old feeling of hatred and distrust between rulers and ruled was kept painfully alive.

Ireland was once more a prey to lawlessness upon one side and to arbitrary authority on the other. Eighty-seven years of union still found the island distracted, disloyal, and impoverished.

We have seen that the Government had rejected Parnell's Land Bill of 1886; had refused (1) to admit leaseholders to the benefits of the Land Act of 1881,

[1] The most important provisions of the Crimes Act were: (1) That when a crime was committed an inquiry upon oath might take place, though no one was in custody charged with committing the crime. (2) That trial by jury might be suspended, and trial by magistrate substituted, in the following cases: (*a*) taking part in any criminal conspiracy now punishable by law; (*b*) using violence and intimidation; (*c*) riot and unlawful assembly; (*d*) forcibly seizing premises from which a tenant had been evicted; (*e*) interfering with the officers of the law in discharge of their duties; (*f*) inciting to any of these offences. The Lord Lieutenant was given power to proclaim disturbed districts and dangerous associations. The right of appeal was given where the sentence was over a month. In March Sir Michael Hicks-Beach retired from the office of Irish Secretary. He was succeeded by Mr. Arthur Balfour. It may be stated that early in the session of 1887 the closure, by a bare majority and on the motion of any member (provided the consent of the Chair was given to the motion and 200 members voted for it), was adopted.

(2) to revise the judicial rents prior to 1885. 'I am not at all sure,' Lord Salisbury had said in August 1886, 'that the judicial rents were not fixed with a perfect cognisance of the fall in prices;[1] the fall has been going on for many years, and it is highly improbable that the courts, in assigning judicial rents, have not taken that into consideration. . . . We do not contemplate any revision of judicial rents. We do not think it would be honest, and we think it would be exceedingly inexpedient.' Nevertheless Lord Salisbury did in 1887 the precise thing which he had declared in 1886 it would not be 'honest' or 'expedient' to do. He carried a Land Bill admitting leaseholders to the benefits of the Land Act of 1881, and authorising the revision of the judicial rents fixed during the years 1881, 1882, 1883, 1884, and 1885. Parnell sat quietly in the House of Commons and looked cynically on while this measure, supported by the full strength of the Tory party, passed, practically without opposition, into law.

A close alliance was now formed between Irish Nationalists and English Liberals, and the Home Rule cause entered on a new phase. Irish members who twelve months before had been regarded as pariahs were now welcomed on Liberal platforms and fêted in Liberal drawing-rooms.

The whilom rebels of the Land League (once described as ready to 'march through rapine to the dismemberment of the Empire') had suddenly become political lions and social pets. A Liberal candidate would scarcely think of beginning an election contest without having a brace of Irishmen by his side. 'Send

[1] 'In 1886 the price of produce had fallen from 30 to 40 per cent., and the judicial rents fixed during the four preceding years, when prices had been higher, became in consequence rack rents.'—*Annual Register*, 1888.

us an Irish member' was the stereotyped order despatched periodically by the provincial Liberal associations to the Irish Press agency in London. Irishmen who had been in jail were in special request. Irish members swarmed in the English constituencies, preaching 'peace and goodwill.' Liberals overran Ireland, sympathising with the victims of the Castle, and glorying in the heroes of the Plan of Campaign.

I met no English Liberal at this period who doubted the loyal professions of the Irish Parliamentarians. I met many Liberals who doubted the loyal professions of Parnell. They believed that every Irish member was willing to accept a settlement of the Irish question on the basis of a 'subordinate' Parliament. But they did not know what was at the back of Parnell's mind. 'Outwardly he is much changed,' an English Liberal said to me, 'but I suspect in his heart he hates us as much as ever.' It would be a bold man who would at any time say positively what was at the back of Parnell's mind, or in the recesses of his heart; but this much is certain—he was never moved, as other Irish members were moved, by the apparent zeal with which the Liberal party, spurred by Mr. Gladstone, had taken up the cause of Ireland.

'Parnell was staying with me in Cork, in 1887,' says Mr. Horgan. 'We were all at that time full of Mr. Gladstone and the Liberal party. Almost every Nationalist in the city had a portrait of Mr. Gladstone in his house. The old man was nearly as popular as the young Chief. But Parnell remained unaffected by the general enthusiasm. While he was with me he never spoke of Mr. Gladstone or the Liberals. I thought this strange, so one evening I said to him: "Mr. Parnell, everyone in Cork is talking about Mr.

Gladstone except you. I would like to know what you think of him, now." "I think," he answered frigidly, "of Mr. Gladstone and the English people what I have always thought of them. They will do, what we can make them do."'

The Irish members were, as a rule, eager to go on Liberal platforms, and pleased with the social attentions showered upon them. All these things, they thought, were making for Home Rule. They had implicit faith in the Liberals, and cultivated the friendliest relations with their new allies. But Parnell stood apart. He disliked going on English platforms, and shunned English society. He believed only in his own strength. He did not object to let his followers use 'kid gloves.' His reliance was always on the 'mailed hand,' soft though the covering in which it might be encased. 'I do not object,' he said to me in later years, 'to an English alliance which we can control; I object to an English alliance which the English control.'

The Irish member whom Liberals most desired to see on English platforms was the one who most disliked to come—Parnell. A distinguished Liberal asked the Irish whip if Parnell would address a meeting of his constituents. The whip saw the Chief, who, after some persuasion, consented to attend. There was a great gathering. Pains were taken to give the Irish leader a worthy reception. He never came. The distinguished Liberal complained to the Irish whip of this treatment. The whip reported the matter to Parnell.

'Ah!' said the Chief, 'you ought to have sent me a telegram on the morning of the meeting. I forgot all about it. Let them call another meeting and I will attend.'

Another meeting was called. Parnell attended, and never, even in Ireland, did he receive a more hearty welcome. One of the most charming leaders of society invited him to dinner. He did not answer the invitation, and he did not come to the dinner.

A week afterwards Lady —— received a telegram from him saying he would dine with her the following evening; she, however, was engaged to dine out. What was to be done? for the chance of meeting Parnell was not to be lightly thrown away. With a woman's wit and resource she got over the difficulty by inviting her hostess to have the dinner party at *her* house. Parnell came. In the course of the evening Lady —— said: 'We are very pleased to have you with us, Mr. Parnell, but this is not the evening we asked you for.' How is that?' he said. 'I wrote to you to the House of Commons inviting you for last Wednesday.' 'Ah!' he said, 'never write to me; always wire to me.'

An ex-Cabinet Minister had invited him to dine. He did not answer the letter, and he did not come to dinner. A month later the ex-Minister met him in the Lobby and reminded him of the invitation. 'I never got your letter,' said Parnell. The ex-Minister mentioned the date. 'I expect,' said Parnell, 'it is lying on the table amongst a heap of letters I have not yet opened.'

A great Liberal meeting was held at St. James's Hall. Mr. Morley presided. Parnell was invited, and he accepted the invitation. The managers of the meeting, however, did not feel sure of him. First, they thought it extremely doubtful that he would come. Secondly, they were a little uneasy as to what he would say if he did come. All the other Irish members could be relied on to make orthodox Liberal speeches.

But what Parnell might say no man could forecast. It was finally arranged that Mr. Morley should meet Parnell at a given point, should drive him to St. James's Hall, and generally take care of him. They dined together, and then drove to the meeting. On the way Parnell suddenly thrust his hand into his coat pocket, and took out a little box wrapped in paper. Mr. Morley's attention was diverted. He knew something about Parnell's superstitions, and probably suspected that this was a charm. Parnell treated the box with great care, unfolded the paper, opened it gingerly, and took out—a flower, which he immediately put in his buttonhole. By the time this operation was over the carriage stopped at St. James's Hall. Mr. Morley and Parnell alighted. The Chief had not spoken a word about politics, nor indeed about anything else, during the drive.

'I was at the meeting,' says Mr. Frederic Harrison, 'and sat next Parnell. I was much struck by his appearance when he spoke. He had one hand behind his back, which he kept closing and opening spasmodically all the time. It was curious to watch the signs of nervous excitement and tension which one saw looking from the back, while in front he stood like a soldier on duty, frigid, impassive, resolute—not a trace of nervousness or emotion. He did not seem to care about putting himself in touch with his audience. He came to say something, and said it with apparent indifference to his surroundings.' On leaving the hall a crowd closed around him, everyone eager to get near, and many struggling to grasp his hand. It was only by the help of some friends that he was extricated from the throng and led to a carriage, in which he drove away.

'He will soon set the English as mad as the Irish,' observed a bystander, as an enthusiastic cheer broke from the mob.

Throughout the years 1887, 1888, and 1889 Parnell remained comparatively inactive, as he had remained throughout the years 1883, 1884, and part of 1885, and for the same reasons—public policy, health, and Mrs. O'Shea. His health seems to have been in a precarious state all the time. He appeared to me during the latter years to be lethargic and morbidly nervous.

One evening I sat with him in the Smoking-room of the House of Commons. 'This place,' he said, 'is killing me. There are draughts everywhere. There is a draught now under this seat, I feel it on my legs. It is a badly constructed building.' One used to see him occasionally in the streets closely wrapped up in a long coat, with a muffler round his throat and his hat pulled tightly over his eyes.

'Parnell liked to go about partly disguised,' says a parliamentary colleague. 'He did not like people to talk to him in the streets. He did not wish to be recognised. One day I met him in the street so wrapped up, and wearing a long shabby coat, with his face half hidden in a big muffler, that I hardly knew him. But his firm, stately bearing could not be mistaken. I kept out of his way, but watched him as he walked along, following him at a respectful distance. He would stop now and then, and look into the window of a gun shop, or of a shop where there were mechanical contrivances. He would also stand and look at any workmen who were about. He came to a part of the Strand where the street was taken up, and a lot of workmen were engaged. I should say he stood there for

quite fifteen minutes watching the men. I stood there, too, keeping out of his sight. Suddenly he wheeled around and saw me. I was quite in a funk, for I was afraid that he knew I had been following him all the time. He beckoned to me. I went to him. "You are here too," he said. "I like looking at these working men. A working man has a pleasant life, when he has plenty to do and is fairly treated." We then walked together to the House.'

Parnell was walking another day along the Strand, with, I think, his secretary, Mr. Campbell. An Irish member passed and saluted the Chief. 'Who is that?' asked Parnell. 'Why, don't you know?' said his companion; 'it is one of our party, it is Mr. ——.' 'Ah!' said Parnell, 'I did not know we had such an ugly man in the party.'

He was frequently absent from the House of Commons in those years. 'It must have been very awkward for Parnell's people to have him away so often,' one of the Liberal whips said to me. 'And yet,' he added quickly, 'I am not sure that his very absence does not add to his authority. They (the Irish members) know he is there, and that he may appear at any moment; that knowledge keeps them in order.' 'And,' I ventured to observe, 'keeps other people in order too.' 'Perhaps,' he said, with a smile.

One afternoon Parnell dropped into the House. He sat near the Irish whip. 'If the House divides now,' he said, 'the Government will be beaten.' 'Impossible,' said the whip; 'think of their majority.' 'There are more Liberals than Tories in the House at the present moment,' quietly responded Parnell. 'How do you know?' asked the whip. 'I counted the

June 19/88

My dear D. Kenny

The Party are making great exertions to secure a full attendance of their members for the divisions on the Local Govt Bill. An important division will probably be taken at the morning sitting on Friday next, and another on Scotch Disestablishment at the evening sitting on the same day. I am very unwilling

to ask you to come over, but I think I ought now to do so and I hope that you will be able to stay for ten days or a fortnight.

Yours very truly
Charles Stewart Parnell

coats as I came up,' was the answer. The House did divide, not immediately, as Parnell had suggested, but at the end of an hour, when the Government narrowly escaped defeat.

When we speak of Parnell's comparative inactivity, we must never forget that—rightly or wrongly—he was at this period in favour of an inactive policy. 'We can be more moderate,' he had said in September 1886, 'than we were in 1879 or in 1880, because our position is very much stronger. I don't say that we should be unduly moderate, but our position is a good deal different from the position of 1874 and from the position of 1879, and I believe that the Irish members and the Irish people will recognise this.'

Though attending few public meetings, he kept his eye on business details and watched and influenced the progress of affairs. In January 1888 we find him writing to Dr. Kenny:

Parnell to Dr. Kenny

January 19, '88, House of Commons.

'My dear Dr. Kenny,—The party are making great exertions to secure a full attendance of their members for the divisions on the Local Government Bill. An important division will probably be taken at the morning sitting on Friday next, and another on Scotch Disestablishment at the evening sitting on the same day. I am very unwilling to ask you to come over, but I think I ought now to do so, and I hope that you will be able to stay for ten days or a fortnight.

'Yours very truly,

'Charles Stewart Parnell.'

In the spring of 1888 Mr. Edward Dwyer Gray, the managing director of the 'Freeman's Journal' Company, died. Parnell wrote to Mr. McCarthy:

Parnell to Mr. McCarthy

'22 Cheyne Gardens, Chelsea Embankment: April 2, '88.

'My dear McCarthy,—Your son tells me that if I call here to-morrow about five in the afternoon I shall have a chance of finding you in. Kindly, therefore, expect me at that hour, as I am anxious to see you about the position of managing directorship of the "Freeman's Journal," vacant by the death of poor Gray. You will have guessed that there is likely to be a very lively competition for the office and considerable difficulty in reconciling the various claims, as well as a total absence, so far, of any candidate who combines all the necessary qualifications.

'It is of the highest importance that the "Freeman" should continue to occupy the position—financial, political, and journalistic—it has hitherto held, and this cannot be expected unless a first-class man can be found to fill Gray's place.

'I have from the first been convinced that you are the man, and that if you will allow yourself to be brought forward you will be acceptable to all parties and be unanimously elected. Of course I do not know how the position would suit you personally, but pray do not dismiss the matter too hastily, but consider it carefully, until I have the opportunity of seeing you to-morrow.

'Yours very truly,

'Charles Stewart Parnell.'

McCarthy did not allow himself to be 'brought

forward,' and the vacant place was ultimately filled by another.

Of course the Irish supported the Liberal candidates everywhere in those days. Upon one occasion an Irish member, O., who had a personal quarrel over some business matters with a Liberal candidate, called at the Irish Press agency, saw the gentlemen in charge of the department (whom I shall call A. and B. respectively), and said: 'Don't send any member to support K. (the Liberal candidate); 'the fellow is not worth it.'

'When,' says B., 'O. left, I said to my colleague: "I think we ought to tell this to the Chief. He won't like to have the agency used for O.'s purposes." The next evening I told the Chief as we were walking up and down the corridor leading from the Lobby to the Library. Parnell turned round sharply, his eyes flashing with anger, and said: "Where is O.?" "In the Lobby," I answered. "Send him to me at once." I went into the Lobby and told O. that Parnell wanted to see him. He walked off with a light and jaunty step. I could not resist the temptation of watching the interview through the glass door leading out of the Lobby.

'Parnell turned sharply on O. as he came up. Then they walked up and down the corridor. Parnell seemed to be speaking with much vehemence. His face was as black as thunder, and his eyes gleamed with passion. I could see him stretching out his hand, clenching his fist, and turning fiercely on O. Then he shook his head, pointed to the Library, and walked off to the Lobby, leaving O. alone in the passage. O. came back to the Lobby, no longer with a light and jaunty step.

'"My God!" said he to me, "just see what [A]

(naming my colleague) has let me in for. Parnell has abused me like a pickpocket, all on account of that d——d scoundrel K. (the Liberal candidate). It is a shame for [A.], and what harm, but we were at school together." '

Mr. Gladstone and Parnell now changed places. The ex-Minister became an agitator; the agitator a circumspect statesman. In England Mr. Gladstone fought the battle of Home Rule earnestly and bravely. He thought of nothing but Ireland, and allowed his followers to think of nothing but Ireland. His speeches were full of fire and energy. Had he been an Irishman they would have been called violent, perhaps lawless. He had, in truth, caught the spirit of Irish agitation. Had he been born under the shadow of the Galtee mountains his denunciations of English rule could not have been more racy of the soil.

Parnell, on the other hand, had become very moderate. It was clear that if the principle of an Irish Parliament and an Irish Executive were accepted, and if the subjects of land, education, and police were handed over to the Irish authorities, he would have been willing to consider every other question of detail in a conciliatory spirit.

'Parnell,' says Mr. Cecil Rhodes, 'was the most reasonable and sensible man I ever met;' and then the great colonist, whose extraordinary personality, whose remarkable power for commanding men, remind one so much of the Irish leader himself, told me the story of his relations with our hero. As this story bears upon the question of Parnell's moderation, and serves to show how ready he was to accept a policy of 'give and take,' provided his main purpose was not jeopardised, it may be inserted here;

'I first saw Parnell in 1888. I had closely followed the Home Rule movement. It struck me in the light of local government. I always, even when I was at Oxford, believed in the justice and wisdom of letting localities manage their own affairs.

'Moreover, I was interested in the Home Rule movement because I believed that Irish Home Rule would lead to Imperial Home Rule. I had met Mr. Swift McNeill at the Cape, and I explained my views to him. I furthermore said that I was prepared to back my opinion on Home Rule substantially, which I did, for I sent Parnell 10,000*l.* for the Home Rule cause.

'I came to England in 1888, and saw Mr. Swift McNeill again, and he made arrangements for a meeting between myself and Parnell.

'We met at the Westminster Palace Hotel. After some preliminary conversation, Parnell said:

'"Why, Mr. Rhodes, do you take an interest in this question? What is Ireland to you?"

'I replied that my interest in Ireland was an Imperial interest; that I believed Irish Home Rule would lead to Imperial Home Rule.

'*Parnell.* "What practical proposal do you make? What can I do for you?"

'*Rhodes.* "I think that the Irish members should be retained in the Imperial Parliament; first, for their own sake, next with a view to Imperial Federation, which is my question.

'"(1) If the Irish members are excluded, nothing will persuade the English people but that Home Rule means separation; that Home Rule is the thin end of the wedge; and that when you get it you will next set up a republic, or try to do so. As long as the

English people feel this, how can you expect to get Home Rule? That is the political question as it affects you.

'" (2) Next there is the personal question, if you like, which affects me. I want Imperial Federation. Home Rule with the Irish members in the Imperial Parliament will be the beginning of Imperial Federation. Home Rule with the Irish members excluded from the Imperial Parliament would lead nowhere, so far as my interests, which are Imperial interests, are concerned. Now do you see my point?"

'*Parnell.* "Yes. I do not feel strongly on the question of the retention or the exclusion of the Irish members, but Mr. Gladstone does. The difficulty is not with me, but with him. He is strongly opposed to their retention. I have no objection to meeting English public opinion on that point if Mr. Gladstone would agree. Do you ask me for anything else?"

'*Rhodes.* "Yes. I want a clause—a little clause—a permissive clause, in your next Bill, providing that any colony which contributes to Imperial defence—to the Imperial army or navy—shall be allowed to send representatives to the Imperial Parliament in proportion to its contributions to the Imperial revenue. Then I think the number of the Irish representatives should be cut down in proportion to Ireland's contribution to the Imperial revenue, so as to keep Ireland in line with the Colonies. I think that would be quite fair."

'*Parnell.* "I have no objection to your permissive clause, but I should not consent to the reduction of the number of the Irish members in the Imperial Parliament. It is only by our strength that we can make ourselves felt there, and if you were to cut us down to fifty or forty or thirty they would pay no attention to

us. We must remain in our present numbers. In addition, certain questions will remain still unsettled after the Home Rule Bill has been passed. There are questions relating to the police and the judiciary which may remain unsettled. We must have our full number of members in the Imperial Parliament until those questions are settled."

'*Rhodes.* "Very well. I can understand your difficulties. I do not press that point. Are we agreed on the other points?"

'*Parnell.* "I have no objection to the retention of the Irish members in their present numbers, nor to the permissive clause you suggest."

'*Rhodes.* "Will you put those points to Mr. Gladstone?"

'*Parnell.* "No. I do not think it would be wise for me to put the point to Mr. Gladstone now, he is so strongly opposed to retaining the Irish members. We must bring him gradually round."

'Ultimately it was arranged that I should write a letter to Parnell setting out my views, and that he should send me a reply.'

Parnell's reply was as follows:

Parnell to Mr. Cecil Rhodes

'June 23, 1888.

'DEAR SIR,—I am much obliged to you for your letter of the 19th inst., which confirms the very interesting account given me at Avondale last January by Mr. McNeill as to his interviews and conversations with you on the subject of Home Rule for Ireland. I may say at once, and frankly, that you have correctly judged the exclusion of the Irish members from Westminster to have been a defect in the Home Rule

measure of 1886, and, further, that this proposed exclusion may have given some colour to the accusation so freely made against the Bill that it had a separatist tendency. I say this while strongly asserting and believing that the measure itself was accepted by the Irish people without any afterthought of the kind, and with an earnest desire to work it out with the same spirit with which it was offered—a spirit of cordial goodwill and trust, a desire to let bygones be bygones, and a determination to accept it as a final and satisfactory settlement of the long-standing dispute between Great Britain and Ireland.

'I am very glad that you consider the measure of Home Rule to be granted to Ireland should be thoroughgoing, and should give her complete control over her own affairs without reservation, and I cordially agree with your opinion that there should be effective safeguards for the maintenance of Imperial unity. Your conclusion as to the only alternative for Home Rule is also entirely my own, for I have long felt that the continuance of the present semi-constitutional system is quite impracticable. But to return to the question of the retention of the Irish members at Westminster. My own views upon the points and probabilities of the future, and the bearing of this subject upon the question of Imperial federation—my own feeling upon the measure is that if Mr. Gladstone includes in his next Home Rule measure the provisions of such retention we should cheerfully concur with him, and accept them with goodwill and good faith, with the intention of taking our share in the Imperial partnership. I believe also that in the event I state this will be the case, and that the Irish people will cheerfully accept the duties and responsibilities assigned to them,

and will justly value the position given to them in the Imperial system. I am convinced that it would be the highest statesmanship on Mr. Gladstone's part to devise a feasible plan for the continued presence of the Irish members here, and from my observation of public events and opinions since 1885 I am sure that Mr. Gladstone is fully alive to the importance of the matter, and that there can be no doubt that the next measure of autonomy for Ireland will contain the provisions which you rightly deem of such moment.

'It does not come so much within my province to express a full opinion upon the larger question of Imperial federation, but I agree with you that the continued Irish representation at Westminster immensely facilitates such a step, while the contrary provision in the Bill of 1886 would have been a bar. Undoubtedly this is a matter which should be dealt with in accordance largely with the opinion of the colonies themselves, and if they should desire to share in the cost of Imperial matters, as undoubtedly they now do in the responsibility, and should express a wish for representation at Westminster, I certainly think it should be accorded to them, and that public opinion in these islands would unanimously concur in the necessary constitutional modifications.

'I am, dear sir, yours truly,

'CHAS. STEWART PARNELL.'

Besides this letter, besides his relations with Mr. Rhodes—of which more later on—Parnell gave many proofs of his moderation and reasonableness at this time.

He did not, he said, want an 'armed' police for Ireland. He would have been content with such a police force as existed in the English towns. If

Englishmen preferred the retention of the Irish members, he would have given way on that point. Mr. Gladstone insisted on a 'subordinate' Irish Parliament. Parnell said: 'So be it.'

Mr. Gladstone declared that the 'supremacy' of the Imperial Parliament should be acknowledged and upheld. Parnell said: 'Agreed.' And while making these concessions he never ceased to impress on his followers the necessity of keeping the peace in Ireland.

I cannot give a better illustration of the difference between Mr. Gladstone and Parnell at this period than by showing how each dealt with the Plan of Campaign. Parnell was opposed to the 'plan.' But it had been sprung upon him, and for a time he felt some difficulty in condemning it outright, though he always took care to disclaim all responsibility for its initiation and adoption. Finally he did condemn it in a speech at the Eighty Club on May 8, 1888. He was the guest of the evening, and I doubt if he ever addressed a more sympathetic and even enthusiastic audience. The young men who gathered around him that night would, I think, have cheered almost anything he said.

They were prepared for an advanced policy and an extreme speech. There was not a branch of the National League which would have more readily declared for the Plan of Campaign than the rising young Liberals of the Eighty Club.

When Parnell rose he was received with a burst of cheering which would certainly have gone straight to the heart of a 'mere Celt.' But he was impassive, frigid, unmoved. Having dealt with the Carnarvon incident, and by so doing won the plaudits of the company, he turned to the Plan of Campaign. This part of the speech acted as a cold douche on the assembly. I

never saw a highly strung meeting thrown so completely into a state of collapse. When he finished the fourth sentence my next neighbour poked me in the ribs and said: 'This is bad.' I think my friend's verdict was the verdict of almost everyone in the room.

Parnell said: 'I was ill, dangerously ill. It was an illness from which I have not entirely recovered up to this day. I was so ill that I could not put pen to paper or even read a newspaper. I knew nothing about the movement until weeks after it had started, and even then I was so feeble that for several months, absolutely up to the meeting of Parliament, I was positively unable to take part in any public matter, and was scarcely able to do so for months after. If I had been in a position to advise about it, I candidly admit to you that I should have advised against it.

'I should have advised against it not because I supposed it would be inefficacious with regard to its object—the protection of the Irish tenants. I believe I have always thought that it would be most successful in protecting the Irish tenants from eviction, and in obtaining those reductions in their rent which the Government of Lord Salisbury in 1886 refused to concede to me when I moved the Tenants' Relief Bill. My judgment in that respect has been correct. But I considered, and still consider, that there were features of the Plan of Campaign, and in the way in which it was necessary it should be carried out, which would have had a bad effect upon the general political situation —in other words, upon the national question.'

Next day Mr. Gladstone addressed a great meeting at the Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, when a Home Rule address, signed by 3,730 Nonconformist

ministers, was presented to him. Referring to Mr. Parnell's speech of the previous evening he said:

'Mr. Parnell has very properly said he was not the author of that plan, and that he is not prepared to vindicate it. Nor am I prepared to vindicate it, but I am prepared to say it ought, like the Rebecca riots and a hundred other cases, to be fairly judged. It ought to be well considered who were the real authors of the Plan of Campaign. I say boldly that the real authors of the Plan of Campaign are the present Government, and Mr. O'Brien and those who acted with him were really in the main instruments in the hands of the Government, for reasons which I will immediately tell you. What had taken place?

'In the year 1886 a most disturbing incident had arisen in the Irish land question. The fall in agricultural prices brought about a crisis, and there was general apprehension that even judicial rents could not be paid by the tenants, and that the whole question of the land in Ireland must be reopened by the admission of the leaseholders, whom, in our supreme respect for contract, we had not consented to admit to the benefits of the Act of 1881. The Government appointed a commission to inquire how far this was the case, and whether the rents could be paid or not. We asked from the Opposition side of the House that while the commission was sitting temporary provision might be made to meet those cases where rents could not be paid. What did the Government do? They refused Mr. Parnell's Bill, and refused even the extremely modest demand I made myself that some time should be given to those who proved before the judicial tribunals that they could not pay rent. The Government declared judicial rents to be sacred, that it would be immoral to

alter them, that faith and honour forbade it. Then came the distress, then the evictions, then Bodyke, and then the Plan of Campaign.' Nor was Mr. Gladstone satisfied with a single reference to the subject. Speaking at a garden party at Hampstead on June 30, he referred to it again. He said: 'Do not suppose that I think the Plan of Campaign is a good thing in itself, or that I speak of it as such. I lament everything in the nature of machinery for governing a country outside the regular law of a country. But there are circumstances in which that machinery, though it may be an evil in itself—and it is an evil, because it lets loose many bad passions and gives to bad men the power of playing themselves off as good men, and in a multitude of ways relaxes the ties and bonds that unite society—I say there are many circumstances in which it is an infinitely smaller evil to use this machinery than to leave the people to perish.'

I will give another instance of the eagerness with which Mr. Gladstone took up every subject relating to Ireland, and of the vigour with which he treated it.

In September 1887 the police dispersed a meeting at Mitchelstown, firing on the people, when one man was killed and several were wounded. 'A subsequent and protracted inquiry,' says the 'Annual Register,' 'showed that the police had acted in a most reckless and apparently unauthorised manner. The coroner's jury returned a verdict of wilful murder against the county inspector and three constables. But no steps were taken by the Executive to attach the blame to any of its officers, and "Remember Mitchelstown!" became a political watchword which will long stir sad memories.' Soon after the catastrophe Mr. Gladstone sent a telegram to a correspondent using these words:

'Remember Mitchelstown.' His fellow-countrymen were scandalised. But the old man stood to his guns. Speaking at Nottingham on October 18, 1887, he said: 'Though I regret it very much, it has become a matter of absolute necessity not only to remember Mitchelstown, but even to mention Mitchelstown. It was our duty from the first to keep it in our minds for consideration at the proper time, but the sanction given to such proceedings by the Executive Government, of which the power in Ireland is enormous, requires from us plain and unequivocal and straightforward declarations, with a view to the formation of a sound opinion in England, in order that the pestilent declarations of Mr. Balfour may not be adopted, as they might be with great excuse, by his subordinate agents, and may not be a means of further invasion of Irish liberty, and possibly of further destruction of Irish life. To speak plainly, I say that the law was broken by the agents of the law, and that it is idle to speak to the Irish people about betraying the law if the very Government that so speaks, and that brings in these Bills, has agents which break the law, by advisedly and violently breaking the order of public meetings, and who are sustained in that illegal action.'

I remember being present at a great meeting in Bingley Hall, Birmingham, in 1888. I know not how many thousands were assembled there. But it was impossible for the human voice to reach the furthermost limits of the vast multitude gathered within the ample dimensions of that immense structure. Mr. Gladstone's speech was a wonderful effort, and the enthusiasm it evoked passed all bounds. Few who listened to him will forget the closing words of his address, or the extraordinary outburst of applause

which greeted them. He said: 'We have now got Ireland making a thoroughly constitutional demand —demanding what is, in her own language, a subordinate Parliament, acknowledging in the fullest terms the supremacy of the Parliament of Westminster. How can you know that under all circumstances that moderation of demand will continue? I cannot understand what principle of justice—and still less, if possible, what principle of prudence—it is that induces many—I am glad to say, in my belief, the minority of the people of this country, but still a large minority—to persist in a policy of which the fruits have been unmitigated bitterness, mischief, disparagement, and dishonour. Our opponents teach you to rely on the use of this deserted and enfeebled and superannuated weapon of coercion. We teach you to rely upon Irish affection and goodwill. We teach you not to speculate on the formation of that sentiment. We show you that it is formed already, it is in full force, it is ready to burst forth from every Irish heart and from every Irish voice. We only beseech you, by resolute persistence in that policy you have adopted, to foster, to cherish, to consolidate that sentiment, and so to act that in space it shall spread from the north of Ireland to the south, and from the west of Ireland to the east; and in time it shall extend and endure from this present date until the last years and the last of the centuries that may still be reserved in the counsels of Providence to work out the destinies of mankind.'

Some exaggeration there may have been in these words. But underlying them was a solid substratum of truth. I have not concealed the fact that Parnell rode into power on the wave of Fenianism. But this

wave had now receded. The tide of revolution had been rolled back. A political calm had succeeded the political storm. The Irish people were in a trustful mood. Never had they shown so strong a disposition to rely on parliamentary agitation. In England the cause of Home Rule was unquestionably progressing. The Liberals might or might not have fully understood the Irish demand; they might or might not have appreciated the difference between Local Government and a Parliament on College Green; they might have examined the question for themselves, or they might have been simply led by Mr. Gladstone; but, however these things might have been, the fact is certain—Home Rule was making way on this side of the Channel.

I cannot be expected to approach this subject in a spirit of perfect impartiality. I am an Irish Nationalist with strong convictions, and perhaps strong prejudices. My opinions are, doubtless, coloured by my hopes. Yet I cannot help expressing the belief that some future generation of Englishmen may recognise that Mr. Gladstone's policy was a policy of concord and of peace, well calculated, as sincerely designed, to gratify the national aspirations of Ireland without endangering the stability of the British Empire.

CHAPTER XXI

THE FORGED LETTER

On March 7, 1887, the first of a series of articles entitled 'Parnellism and Crime' appeared in the 'Times.' These articles were written to prove that the Parnell movement was a revolutionary movement stained by crime, and designed to overthrow British authority in Ireland. The 'Times,' however, was not content with framing a general indictment against the Irish leader. The great journal came to close quarters with the arch-rebel. On April 18 it published a fac-simile letter, purporting to bear his signature, in which the Phœnix Park murders were excused and condoned. Here it is:

'Dear Sir,—I am not surprised at your friend's anger, but he and you should know that to denounce the murders was the only course open to us. To do that promptly was plainly our best policy. But you can tell him and all others concerned that, though I regret the accident of Lord F. Cavendish's death, I cannot refuse to admit that Burke got no more than his deserts. You are at liberty to show him this, and others whom you can trust also, but let not my address be known. He can write to the House of Commons.

'Yours very truly,

'Charles S. Parnell.'

Whatever Liberals may now say, there cannot be a doubt that the appearance of this document in a newspaper universally regarded as the Bible of English journalism threw the whole Liberal party into consternation.

'When I came down to breakfast on April 18,' said a Liberal friend, 'I took up my "Times." The first thing which met my eye was that infernal letter. Well, I did not much care about my breakfast after reading it. "There goes Home Rule," said I, "and the Liberal Party" too.'

I asked my friend if it did not occur to him that the 'Times' might have been mistaken—'let in.'

'The "Times" let in,' he exclaimed, 'the cleverest newspaper in the world let in! Why, that is the last thing that any man in England thought of. We were staggered, my dear sir, staggered—that is the plain truth of the business.'

Parnell's letter in the 'Times' was soon the talk of the town. An overwhelming blow had at length been dealt at the whole gang of rebels and murderers. Home Rule was laid in the dust. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that this was the thought and the hope of every Unionist in the land.

In the evening Parnell strolled leisurely down to the House of Commons. 'Have you seen the "Times"'? asked Mr. Harrington. 'No,' said the Chief, who rarely read any newspaper unless his attention was specially called to it. Then Mr. Harrington told him the news. 'Ah!' said Parnell, 'let me see it,' and they went to the Library. 'Parnell,' says Mr. Harrington, 'put the paper before him on the table, and read the letter carefully. I thought he would burst into some indignant exclamation, say "What damned scoundrels!

what a vile forgery!" but not a bit of it. He put his finger on the S. of the signature, and said quite calmly, as if it were a matter of the utmost indifference: "I did not make an S. like that since 1878." "My God!" I thought, "if this is the way he is going to deal with the letter in the House, there is not an Englishman who will not believe that he wrote it."'

On the same evening Parnell dealt with the subject in the House thus:

'Sir, when I first heard of this precious concoction —I heard of it before I saw it, because I do not take in or even read the "Times" usually—when I heard that a letter of this description, bearing my signature, had been published in the "Times," I supposed that some autograph of mine had fallen into the hands of some person for whom it had not been intended, and that it had been made use of in this way. I supposed that some blank sheet containing my signature, such as many members who are asked for their signatures frequently send—I supposed that such a blank sheet had fallen into hands for which it had not been intended, and that it had been misused in this fashion, or that something of this kind had happened. But when I saw what purported to be my signature, I saw plainly that it was an audacious and unblushing fabrication. Why, sir, many members of this House have seen my signature, and if they will compare it with what purports to be my signature in the "Times" of this morning they will see there are only two letters in the whole name which bear any resemblance to letters in my own signature as I write it. I cannot understand how the managers of a responsible and what used to be a respectable journal could have been so hoodwinked, so hoaxed, so bamboozled—and that is the most

charitable interpretation which I can place on it—as to publish such a production as that as my signature, my writing. Its whole character is entirely different. I unfortunately write a very cramped hand, my letters huddle into each other, and I write with great difficulty and slowness. It is, in fact, a labour and a toil for me to write anything at all. But the signature in question is written by a ready penman, who has evidently covered as many leagues of letter-paper in his life as I have yards. Of course, this is not the time, as I have said, to enter into full details and *minutiæ* as to comparisons of handwriting, but if the House could see my signature and the forged, fabricated signature they would see that, except as regards two letters, the whole signature bears no resemblance to mine. The same remark applies to the letter. The letter does not purport to be in my handwriting. We are not informed who has written it. It is not even alleged that it was written by anyone who was ever associated with me. The name of the anonymous letter-writer is not mentioned. I do not know who he can be. The writing is strange to me. I think I should insult myself if I said—I think, however, that I perhaps ought to say it in order that my denial may be full and complete—that I certainly never heard of the letter. I never directed such a letter to be written. I never saw such a letter before I saw it in the "Times." The subject-matter of the letter is preposterous on the surface. The phraseology of it is absurd—as absurd as any phraseology that could be attributed to me could possibly be. In every part of it it bears absolute and irrefutable evidence of want of genuineness and want of authenticity. Politics are come to a pretty pass in this country when a leader of a party of eighty-six members has to stand up at

ten minutes past one in the House of Commons in order to defend himself from an anonymous fabrication such as that which is contained in the "Times" of this morning.'

After this declaration the subject of the facsimile letter was for a time permitted to drop. The 'Times' went on printing the articles on 'Parnellism and Crime.' It also published some incriminating letters purporting to have been written by Mr. Egan, the former treasurer of the Land League. Finally, Mr. F. H. O'Donnell, ex-M.P., feeling himself aggrieved by certain statements in 'Parnellism and Crime,' took proceedings against the 'Times.' The 'Times' pleaded that nothing in the articles pointed at Mr. O'Donnell, and the jury took the same view of the case. However, in the conduct of the suit the 'Times' counsel—the Attorney-General[1]—reiterated the charge levelled at Parnell and Parnellism. The Irish leader was compelled to take immediate action.

He promptly asked the House of Commons to appoint a Select Committee to inquire whether the facsimile letter was a forgery. The Government would not consent to this proposal, but agreed to appoint a Special Commission, composed of three judges, to investigate all the charges made by the 'Times.'

In September 1888 the Special Commission met. The commissioners were Mr. Justice (afterwards Lord) Hannen, Mr. Justice Day, Mr. (now Lord) Justice Smith.

Each party to the cause was represented by a strong Bar, the Attorney-General leading for the 'Times,' Sir

[1] Sir Richard Webster, Q.C., M.P., G.C.M.G.

Charles Russell (now Lord Russell of Killowen, Lord Chief Justice of England) leading for Parnell.

Parnell concentrated all his attention on the facsimile letter. The general charges against the League were, in his opinion, ancient history, scarcely worth discussing, and certainly not worth the lawyers' fees which had to be paid for dealing with them. 'If,' he argued, 'we can prove the letter to be a forgery, everything else will go by the board. If we cannot prove it to be a forgery, then, no matter what may be the finding of the Commission on the general issue, we shall stand condemned. We must put the man who forged that letter into the box and wring the truth from him. Our victory will then be complete.'

Hence during the whole progress of the case he thought of the facsimile letter and of little else.[1] I shall now tell the story of that remarkable document.

In May 1885 a Unionist organisation—the Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union—was formed in Dublin. The committee consisted of some of the most distinguished 'Loyalists' in the country. A young journalist, Mr. James Caulfield Houston, was appointed secretary.

The objects of the Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union were, in brief, to destroy the National party and to save the Empire. In this good work Mr. Houston—acting upon his own responsibility, he tells us—enlisted the services of Mr. Richard Pigott, of 11 Sandy Cove Avenue, Kingstown, Dublin.

Almost everyone versed in Irish politics knew 'Dick' Pigott, or knew of him. He was proprietor of the 'Irishman' newspaper, but had been bought out by Parnell. Professing patriotism, he was ready

[1] He attached little importance to the Egan letter. 'The whole case,' he said, 'is the facsimile letter.'

for valuable consideration to swear away the life of every honest man in the land. Most people shunned him as a moral leper whose very touch was contamination. There is something almost pathetic in the 'ruffian's' account of himself in a letter written to Mr. Forster in 1882, when that gentleman held the office of Irish Secretary.

'I am within measurable distance of actual destitution. I have sought the humblest situations, but all in vain; no one will have anything to do with me.' Richard Pigott seldom told the truth. This was the truth.

In 1881 he asked Mr. Forster to subsidise his newspaper in the interests of the Government. In the very same year he asked Mr. Patrick Egan, the treasurer of the Land League, to give him financial support in the interest of the National cause.

On June 2, 1881, he wound up a long and loyal letter to the Irish Secretary, showing how he had always denounced the Land League, with this practical proposal:

'To come to particulars, a sum of 1,500*l.* would get me out of debt. I could manage with 1,000*l.* for the present, if I could compromise with some of my creditors. If the Government will let me have an advance of either sum I will be for ever after the most obedient and, I trust, valuable servant.'

On June 5 Mr. Forster sent a sympathetic reply, refusing the subsidy, but commending Richard for his 'patriotism':

'For months past I have noted the tone of the leaders in your papers, and what you say with regard to them is no more than the truth. I think they have

done real good, and I shall be sincerely sorry if your papers come to an end. But, coming to your actual proposal, I am obliged to say I cannot make the advance you suggest. . . . Allow me to add that, though I must still differ from you greatly, and though we approach Irish matters from very different points of view, yet I most sincerely appreciate the patriotism which has induced you to some extent to modify your views.'

In the same year Pigott wrote to 'My dear Egan,' saying he had been offered 500*l.* to publish documents, mainly 'fabricated,' but which would nevertheless be injurious to the League, even if there were only a few grains of truth mixed up with the bushel of falsehood.

'I think,' he said, 'that the Castle people are the prime movers [in the matter].' Then he threatens the treasurer of the League. 'To come to the point, I am in dreadful straits. I must have money somehow, or throw up the sponge at once. I cannot afford to let slip so lucky a chance for saving myself literally from ruin. No matter what the consequences are, I must and will take this offer. Unless you come to my assistance I will close with these people.'

Mr. Egan, who knew his man, replied sharply and decisively:

'As I understand your letter, it is a threat that, unless I forward you money by Monday next, you will close with the Government, and in consideration of a sum of 500*l.* publish certain documents which you believe to be false against the Land League. Under any circumstances, I have no power so to apply any of the funds of the League, but even if I had the power I would not under such circumstances act upon it.

Whenever any such accusations are made we will know how to defend ourselves.'

Pigott wound himself into the kind heart of Mr. Forster, who was, of course, quite ignorant of the devious ways of Irish politics and of Irish politicians. The Chief Secretary had refused to subsidise Pigott's newspapers, but he was willing to give Pigott a little financial help out of his own private purse. On June 7 he wrote:

'If you find immediate difficulties so overpowering that you are forced to give up your paper and look out for other work, I hope you will allow me to let you have a sum of from 50*l.* to 100*l.*, which might help to tide you over the interim between the old and the new work, and which you would not repay unless times mend. I am not a rich man, but I have enough to enable me to help where I really feel sympathy, and I need not say I would secure that there was no publicity.'

Mr. Forster sent Pigott 100*l.*, urging him 'not to let the thought of repayment be a worry or a trouble to you,' which indeed it was not. Before the end of the year Egan published Pigott's 'begging' letters to him in the 'Freeman's Journal.'

Mr. Forster was astonished. On December 10 Pigott received the following letter:

Chief Secretary's Lodge, Phœnix Park: Dec. 9, 1881.

'Sir,—Mr. Forster desires me to ask whether the letters purporting to be written by you to Mr. Egan, and sent by him to to-day's "Freeman's Journal," were really written by you.

'Your obedient servant,

'Horace West.'

The wretched Pigott had to admit the authenticity of the letters, but offered an elaborate and futile explanation in self-defence. One of the last letters he received from Mr. Forster was dated January 13, 1882. Fortunate would it have been for the miserable outcast had he taken the advice then given by the tender-hearted Chief Secretary. Mr. Forster wrote:

'I do not consider that you have any claim whatever either upon the Government or myself, and I must decline to ask any of my colleagues to give you pecuniary help. On the other hand, I should be glad if I could to help you out of your difficulties. So far as I can judge from what you tell me your best chance is in America, and I am willing to give you myself 50*l.* for the purpose of enabling you to go there, but it must be clearly understood that this is all I shall do!'[1] Mr. Forster sent the 50*l.*, but Pigott did not go to America. He remained in Ireland, to become, in due course, the ally of Mr. Houston and the 'Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union.'

In 1885 Pigott was collecting materials for a pamphlet called 'Parnellism Unmasked.' He wrote to some prominent Unionist politicians for funds to publish this important work. It would seem that Mr. Houston heard of him and of his project through these politicians. But be this as it may, the fact is certain that in September 1885 the secretary of the 'Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union' called on the Nationalist renegade at his residence in Sandy Cove Avenue, Kingstown. 'Parnellism Unmasked' was at once discussed, and Mr. Houston finally gave Pigott 60*l.* towards its publication. The pamphlet appeared anonymously,

[1] These letters were produced before the Special Commission by Sir Wemyss Reid.

and, of course, made a stir in Unionist circles. But Mr. Houston wanted something more than pamphlets. He wanted documentary evidence 'connecting the Parnellite movement with the crime prevalent in the country.[1] In December 1885 he asked Pigott to find this evidence. 'It is impossible,' said Pigott. 'Try,' urged Houston; 'I will pay you a guinea a day, and your hotel and travelling expenses during the search.[2] This magnificent offer opened a new vista to the astonished vision of the disgraced and destitute journalist. He suddenly found himself in touch not with the blackguards of the League, but with the gentlemen of the 'Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union.'

'A guinea a day and hotel and travelling expenses.' Here was an offer which would have stimulated the energy even of a man not pinched by poverty. Pigott said he would try, but that he would have to travel a good deal. He did try, he did travel. He went to London, to Paris, to Lausanne, to New York, in search of Fenians, who, he said, hated Parnell, and would gladly strike a blow at the Irish leader if they could.

It is right to say that the 'Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union' did not—officially, at all events—supply Pigott with the funds for his benevolent mission. The money was got by the secretary of the organisation from certain distinguished Unionists—to wit, Sir Rowland Blennerhassett (member of the committee of the I. L. P. U.), Mr. Hogg, and—tell it not in Gath! —Lord Richard Grosvenor.

[1] *Special Commission*, Q. 51,722.

[2] See Houston's cross-examination by Sir Charles Russell, *Special Commission*, Q. 50,241. 'Mr. Pigott,' said Mr. Houston, 'did not consent right off; I had some difficulty in persuading him to undertake the work.' *Ibid.*, Q. 50,243.

These excellent personages supplied 'Dick' Pigott with a guinea a day and hotel and travelling expenses while he scoured Europe and America in search of documentary evidence to hang Parnell, or at least send him into penal servitude.

In March 1886 Pigott reported progress to Houston. He had found the documentary evidence—letters signed by Parnell, letters written and signed by Egan. They were at that moment in Paris, in a 'black bag,' where they had been left probably by Frank Byrne or 'by a man named Kelly, who was supposed to have purchased the Phœnix Park knives.'

Pigott gave Houston copies of these compromising documents, eleven letters in all, five of Parnell's and six of Egan's. Among this precious collection was the facsimile letter, sufficient in itself to annihilate Parnell and Parnellism. Towards the end of April Houston called on Mr. Buckle, the editor of the 'Times,' and told him the good news. Mr. Buckle, however, said he would have nothing to do with the business.[1]

In June Mr. Houston came back to Mr. Buckle, and tempted him once more to enter into the plot for the destruction of the Irish leader. But Mr. Buckle again said 'No.' In July Pigott went to Paris to get the letters, whither he was soon followed by Houston, accompanied by another distinguished Unionist, Dr. Maguire, Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin. Pigott, who seems to have been revelling in luxury, stopped at the Hôtel Saint-Pétersbourg. Mr. Houston and Dr. Maguire put up at the Hôtel des Deux Mondes. To the Hôtel des Deux Mondes Pigott came mysteriously one night—

[1] *Special Commission*, Q. 49,898. Mr. Buckle did, however, consult Mr. Macdonald, the manager of the *Times*.

the very night, indeed, of his confederates' arrival—the precious letters in his hand. 'Here they are,' said he. 'The men who have given them to me are downstairs and want to be paid immediately. I must bring down the money or bring back the letters.' Houston took the letters to his colleague, Dr. Maguire, in the adjoining room. They held a consultation, and in a few minutes came to the conclusion that the letters were genuine and that Pigott should be paid. Dr. Maguire advanced the money—850*l.* in Bank of England notes. Houston returned to his own room and handed Pigott 605*l.*—500*l.* for letters, the price demanded by the 'men downstairs,' and 105*l.* for a bonus for the industrious ambassador himself. Mr. Houston did not ask to see the 'men downstairs,' did not even ask their names. He took 'Dick' Pigott on trust. Hastening back to England he went, letters in hand, straight to Lord Hartington. 'I submitted them to him,' says Mr. Houston, 'and stated it would be desirable he should know of their existence. I asked him if he could give me any advice as to their use.' Lord Hartington, however, declined to 'advise.' Then the persistent young secretary of the 'Loyal and Patriotic Union' went back for the third time to Mr. Buckle.

Mr. Buckle now referred him to Mr. John Cameron Macdonald, the manager of the 'Times.' In October 1886 Mr. Houston brought the letters to Mr. Macdonald. Mr. Macdonald said that they should be submitted to the legal advisers of the 'Times,' and that if they were genuine Houston should be paid for them. Mr. Macdonald did not ask Houston from whom he had got the letters. 'I asked him no questions,' said the manager of the 'Times' before the Special Commission. '. . . I took his word throughout.' 'Had

you known Mr. Houston previously?' Mr. Macdonald was asked. 'Slightly,' he answered. 'I had met him once.' Mr. Houston had taken Pigott on trust, Mr. Macdonald took Mr. Houston on trust.

Mr. Soames, the legal adviser of the 'Times,' was next consulted. Like Mr. Macdonald, he asked 'no questions.' 'Did you ask [Houston] from whom he got the letters?' Mr. Soames was asked. He answered: 'I did not.' 'Did you at any time ask him from whom he got them?' 'Never.'[1] The letters were finally submitted to an expert in handwriting, pronounced to be genuine, and accepted and paid for by the 'Times.'[2]

On March 7, as we have seen, the first article on 'Parnellism and Crime' appeared, and some days before its appearance Mr. Houston told Mr. Macdonald for the first time that he had got the letters from Pigott. 'After Mr. Houston made this communication to you, did you make inquiries from other people as to who Pigott was?' Mr. Macdonald was asked. 'No,' he answered. 'What his antecedents were?' 'No; I had no means of doing so.'

On April 18 the facsimile letter was published. In July 1888 came the trial of O'Donnell *v.* Walter. Immediately afterwards the Special Commission was appointed,[3] and the Irish leader and the great English journal stood face to face.

Parnell, as I have said, concentrated all his atten-

[1] Mr. Soames explained that 'Houston told me at the outset that he was pledged not to divulge the name' (Q. 48,537).

[2] Mr. Houston subsequently got two more batches of letters, making eleven letters in all. The total sum paid by the *Times* for these letters was 2,530*l.* (*Report of Special Commission*, p. 58). The *Times* paid Mr. Houston for all purposes 30,000*l.* (Q. 49,010). These 'purposes' were in connection with Irish politics generally.

[3] The Bill was introduced on July 16 (*Annual Register*, p. 144).

tion on the facsimile letter. His one thought was: 'Who has done this thing? How can we find him out?'

'How did Parnell get on the track of Pigott?' I asked Mr. Harrington. 'Pat Egan,' he answered. 'The "Times" published a letter purporting to have been written by Egan. In that letter the word "hesitancy" was spelt with an "e," "hesitency." Egan had in his possession letters of Pigott in which the word was spelt in exactly the same way. This aroused his suspicions, and he at once wrote to us: "Dick Pigott is the forger." Knowing Dick's character, we all shared Egan's suspicions except Parnell himself.'[1]

Egan's suspicions were communicated to Parnell's solicitor, Mr. (now Sir George) Lewis. 'My first act,' says Sir George, 'on receiving Parnell's instructions to act for him was to serve a subpœna on Pigott. He was in Paris at the time, but we watched him until his return to this country, and my clerk served him with the subpœna as he was walking up and down the platform at Euston on his way to Ireland.'

The subpœna was served in September. On the 14th an agent employed by Mr. Labouchere[2] (who had resolved to enter the lists as a free lance) called on Pigott at Kingstown. Would he, so the agent asked, come to London to meet a man from America who wished to see him on important business? The

[1] Parnell suspected another man, whose name need not be mentioned, as the suspicion was quite unfounded.

[2] Soon after the appointment of the Commission an American Land Leaguer brought a packet of letters from Egan to Mr. Labouchere, which the latter gave Mr. Lewis. This man went subsequently to Ireland to see Pigott, and with the help of a confederate induced Pigott to come to London and see Mr. Labouchere.

meeting could take place at Mr. Labouchere's. Pigott fell into the trap. On October 25 he called at Mr. Labouchere's, to find himself confronted by Parnell.

Parnell and Mr. Labouchere charged him point blank with forgery. He said the accusation was false. Then Mr. Lewis entered the room. Parnell and Mr. Labouchere withdrew, and the lawyer and the journalist were left alone. 'Pigott,' said Mr. Lewis, 'you have forged these letters; we have abundant proof, we want no help from you. It is a question for yourself, What will you do? Will you confess your crime, tell the "Times," and let your letters be withdrawn, or will you brazen it out, go into the box, commit perjury, and be sent to penal servitude?' After a show of fight Pigott collapsed, and admitted his guilt. It was arranged that he should see Mr. Lewis next day and make a clean breast of everything in writing. But next day Pigott was in a different frame of mind. He repented his confession, denied his admission, refused to put anything on paper, and determined to brazen it out. On Wednesday, February 20, 1889, he went into the box as a witness for the 'Times.' On Thursday he was cross-examined by Sir Charles Russell. The story of Pigott's cross-examination belongs rather to the life of the Lord Chief Justice of England (Lord Russell of Killowen) than to the life of Charles Stewart Parnell. Those who witnessed the remarkable performance will never forget it. But to give a brief account of the scene would be to do an injustice to the great advocate. Some day the story will be told fully in the proper place. I am, unfortunately, obliged to pass over it lightly. I went into court that 21st of February, with, I am afraid, a joyous feeling, for I wished to see Pigott —whose history was not unknown to me—pilloried,

Yet before he had been an hour under the 'harrow' it was impossible not to pity the doomed wretch. I can well recall his appearance now, as the net was drawn closer and closer around him: the beads of perspiration standing out on his forehead and rolling down his face, the swollen veins, the short rapid breathing, the expression of misery and ruin which overshadowed his countenance, as all hope died away and the iron grip of the merciless advocate tightened round his throat. The fact was wrung from him that on March 4, 1887, three days before the appearance of the first article on 'Parnellism and Crime,' he wrote to Dr. Walsh, Archbishop of Dublin, telling his Grace that 'certain proceedings are in preparation with the object of destroying the influence of the Parnellite party in Parliament.' Certain statements were to be published purporting to prove the complicity of Mr. Parnell himself and some of his supporters with murder and outrage in Ireland, to be followed by the institution of criminal proceedings against these parties by the Government.

'Your Grace may be assured that I speak with full knowledge, and am in a position to prove, beyond all doubt and question, the truth of what I say. And I will further assure your Grace that I am also able to point out how the designs may be successfully combated and finally met. . . . I can exhibit proofs, and suggest how the coming blow may be finally met. . . . I need hardly say that did I consider the parties really guilty of the things charged against them I should not dream of suggesting that your Grace should take any part in an effort to shield them; I only wish to impress on your Grace that the evidence is apparently

convincing, and would probably be sufficient to secure conviction if submitted to an English jury.' Again he wrote: 'I was somewhat disappointed in not having had a line from your Grace, as I ventured to expect I might have been so far honoured. I can assure your Grace that I had no other motive in writing save to avert, if possible, a great danger to people with whom your Grace is known to be in strong sympathy. . . . I have had no part in what has been done to the prejudice of the Parnellite party, though I was enabled to become acquainted with all the details.'

Sir Charles rubbed every sentence of these letters into the bewildered witness. 'What do you say to that?' he asked.

Pigott. 'That appears to me clearly that I had not the letters in my mind.'

Sir Charles. 'Then if it appears to you clearly that you had not the letters in your mind, what had you in your mind?'

'It must have been something far more serious.'

'What was it?'

'I cannot tell you. I have no idea.'

'It must have been something far more serious than the letters?'

'Far more serious.'

'Can you give my Lord any clue of the most indirect kind to what it was?'

'I cannot.'

'Or from whom you heard it?'

'No.'

'Or when you heard it?'

'Or when I heard it.'

'Or where you heard it?'

'Or where I heard it.'

'Have you ever mentioned this fearful matter, whatever it is, to anybody?'

'No. I was under the impression,' exclaimed the unhappy man in an agony of despair, 'that I had received back all my letters to Archbishop Walsh.'

On Friday, February 22, the cross-examination was resumed but not concluded. When Pigott left the box that afternoon, Parnell, near whom I was standing, remarked, 'That man will not come into the box again.' Then, turning to Mr. Lewis, he said: 'Mr. Lewis, let that man be watched. If you do not keep your eye on him you will find that he will leave the country.' 'It is little matter to us now, Mr. Parnell,' replied the lawyer, 'whether he stays or goes.'

On its rising the court adjourned until Tuesday, February 26. On that morning when the judges took their places Pigott was called. There was no answer.

President. 'Where is the witness?'

Attorney-General. 'My Lords, as far as I know, I have no knowledge whatever of the witness, but I am informed that Mr. Soames has sent to his hotel, and he has not been there since eleven o'clock last night.'

Sir Charles Russell. 'If there is any delay in his appearance, I ask your lordship to issue a warrant for his apprehension, and to issue it immediately.'

It was decided that no steps should be taken until the morrow, when perhaps some light might be thrown on this new development.

'Parnell and I,' says Mr. Harrington, 'went to Scotland Yard to ask if anything had been heard of Pigott. Parnell carried a black bag. Mr. Williamson

pretended not to know us. "Mr. Williamson," said the Chief, "there is no need of mystery between you and me; I have often seen you following me." We left Scotland Yard and walked to the House. Suddenly Parnell discovered he had left his black bag behind. "Ah," he said, "they will think they have got a great find. But all they will see in the bag is a pair of dry socks and a pair of boots."'

On the morrow the Attorney-General informed the court that a document in Pigott's handwriting had been received from Paris. A closed envelope addressed to one of the 'Times' agents in the case was then handed to Mr. Cunynghame, the Secretary to the Commission. The envelope contained a confession of guilt, taken down by Mr. Labouchere in the presence of Mr. G. A. Sala, and signed by Pigott on February 23[1] at Mr. Labouchere's house. I will quote only one passage from this confession (pp. 32, 33):

'*Letters.* The circumstances connected with the obtaining of the letters, as I gave in evidence, are not true. No one, save myself, was concerned in the transaction. I told Mr. Houston that I had discovered the letters in Paris, but I grieve to have to confess that I simply fabricated them, using genuine letters of Messrs. Parnell and Egan in copying certain words, phrases, and general character of the handwriting. I traced some words and phrases by putting the genuine letters against the window and placing the sheets on which I wrote over it. These genuine letters were the letters from Mr. Parnell, copies of which have been read in

[1] On Saturday morning, February 23, Pigott called of his own accord on Mr. Labouchere, saying he desired to make a full confession. Mr. Labouchere sent for Mr. Sala, who lived close by, to witness the statement. Q. 53,944.

court, and four or five letters from Mr. Egan which were also read in court. I destroyed these letters after using them. Some of the signatures I traced in this manner and some I wrote. I then wrote to Houston, telling him to come to Paris for the documents. I told him that they had been placed in a black bag with some old accounts, scraps of paper, and old newspapers. On his arrival I produced to him the letters, accounts, and scraps of paper. After a very brief inspection he handed me a cheque on Cook for 500*l.*, the price that I told him I had agreed to pay for them. At the same time he gave me 105*l.* in bank-notes as my own commission.'

In the face of this confession the 'Times' of course withdrew the facsimile letter,[1] and the Commission found that it was 'a forgery.' The last scene in this squalid drama was enacted on March 5. A warrant had been issued for Pigott's arrest on the charge of perjury. The police tracked him to an hotel in Madrid. 'Wait,' he said to the officers who showed him the warrant, 'until I go to my room for some things I want.' The officers waited. The report of a pistol was heard, there was a rush to Pigott's room, and the wretched man was found on the floor with a bullet through his brain. He had died by his own hand.[2] So ended the elaborate plot to destroy the Irish leader.

Some idea of the effect produced by the Pigott incident may be gathered from the following extracts from the diary of the late Mrs. Sydney Buxton, which I am permitted to publish:

[1] All letters were withdrawn.

[2] Dr. Maguire, who had been summoned to give evidence for the *Times*, died suddenly in London.

'February 24, 1889: Eaton Place.

'A very exciting week. I spent Thursday and Friday, 21st and 22nd, at the Parnell Commission, hearing Pigott examined and coming in for the whole of his cross-examination by Sir C. Russell. There was only one and a quarter hours of this on Thursday afternoon, but it was the turn of the tide. It was the most exciting time I ever spent. In the end we came away simply astonished that a fellow-creature could be such a liar as Pigott. It was very funny, too; but I could not help thinking of Becky Sharp's "It's so easy to be virtuous on 5,000*l.* a year;" and to see that old man standing there, with everybody's hand against him, driven into a corner at last, after all his turns and twists, was somewhat pathetic.

'Of course, it is a tremendous triumph for the Home Rulers. I am a Unionist, and I feel this is a blow for Unionism.'

'26th February.

'There will be a great feeling that Mr. Parnell has been the victim of a conspiracy, as in the case of the letters he certainly has; and people won't stop to ask which facts are affected by the Pigott revelations.'

'Sunday, 3rd March, 1889: London.

'Another week of excitement about Pigott. On Tuesday the Commission re-assembled, and it was found he had bolted—leaving the "Times" to withdraw the letters and to make what is called an "apology." . . .'

On March 19 Parnell dined at Mr. Buxton's and met Mr. Gladstone. Mrs. Buxton writes:

'Sunday, 19th of March.

'A most exciting evening. Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone dined here, and Mr. Parnell. After dinner Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Parnell had a long talk. Mr. Gladstone of course assumed that Mr. Parnell knew all about the ancient history of Ireland, and when he said: "That occurred, you will remember, in '41," Mr. Parnell looked as if he didn't know what century, and didn't the least care.

'I thought Mr. Parnell most fascinating. He is very tall, grave, and quiet; rather amusing, in a serious, dry way, and—though he gives one the impression of being very reserved and perfectly impassive—perfectly willing to talk over everybody and everything. I had thought it would be uphill work finding subjects of conversation, as I imagined we could not discuss the Commission or mention "Parnellism and Crime," and I thought I should run dry over the Avondale mine. But before I knew where I was we were deep in Pigott, and he was telling me all about the interview at Labouchere's, where Parnell, Labouchere, and Lewis met Pigott. "Labouchere said to Pigott: 'I suppose you wanted to take the "Times" in?' and Pigott seemed to agree. But all of a sudden, turning to Parnell, he said, 'What should you say if I brought out a man who would swear to having had the letters in his possession and having sold them to me?' Parnell answered: 'Mr. Pigott, you will hardly find another such a scoundrel as yourself in the world.'"

'Mr. Parnell told me that all through Pigott's examination-in-chief he almost despaired of being able to prove the forgeries—Pigott's story seemed so well composed, and he himself so calm and collected. We talked a little about Home Rule and the future of Ire-

land—my Unionism getting very shaky—and about the prison question too.'

I shall now turn to a comical aspect of the case. We have seen that Mr. P. J. Sheridan was a Land League organiser. He was suspected of getting up outrages in the West when Parnell was in Kilmainham, and generally, outside Land League circles, he bore the reputation of a 'desperate character.'

At the time of the Commission he was settled in America, the proud possessor of 'two ranches and three thousand sheep.' The 'Times' was told that Sheridan could make 'terrible revelations,' eclipse Pigott, and blow the whole Irish parliamentary gang to pieces. That journal sent an agent, Mr. Kirby, to America to see and sound Sheridan.

Between the 'Times' agent in America and the 'Times' lawyer in London a number of telegrams (chiefly) in cypher passed. These telegrams fell into the hands of the Irish Nationalists. I am not permitted to tell the dramatic story of how the wires were 'tapped,' how the key to the cypher was discovered, and how the secrets of the 'Times' became known to the men whose destruction the 'Times' was compassing; but I hold copies of the telegrams, and shall set them out.

The first telegram, not in cypher, is from Kirby to Mr. Soames, and runs as follows:

'16th November, '88, Montevista, Colo.

'To Assert, London:

'Can purchase ranche and sheep. Particulars from Pueblo to-morrow.'

Mr. Kirby was, of course, a very shrewd gentleman, and his open telegram was, he says, merely sent as a

blind. The next telegram meant business, and was in cypher:

'19th November, '88, Pueblo, Colo.

'To Assert, London:

'Message yesterday intended to mislead operators and others. Have been with Sheridan three days. He will give whole history of Land League that will convict if I buy his two ranches and 3,000 sheep, price 25,000*l*. Reply Chicago, Monday, Mohawk.'

It must be confessed that Sheridan put a very high price on the value of his services—25,000*l*., which, no doubt, he regarded as a mere flyblow to the 'Times.'

The 'Times' did not reply immediately.

On December 11 Mr. Kirby wanted money, and he wired to Mr. Soames:

'Chicago: 11th December, '88.

'Cable two hundred pounds. Must return.'

Next day Mr. Soames wired:

'12th December: London.

'To Kirby, Mohawk, Chicago:

'Court adjourns for five weeks. Come home at once. I must discuss matters personally with you. Money sent to Brown Brothers, New York. Reply when sail.—ASSERT.'

The next telegram is also from Mr. Soames:

'24 December, '88: London.

'To Kirby, Chicago:

'Never allow draft to be drawn on me. Cannot accept yours. Have cabled two hundred and fifty, Bank of Montreal. When will you sail?—ASSERT.'

Kirby then returned to London, but set out to

America again in the spring of 1889. On April 3 he wired to Mr. Soames:

'3rd April, '89: Pueblo.

'To Assert, London:

'Sheridan has wired to meet him Montevista, Tuesday morning. Leave to-night. Cable to-morrow night.—TAX.'

Not in cypher.

In the next telegram Kirby becomes Cæsarian in his language.

'4th April, '89: Aldmasa.

'To Assert, London:

'*Veni, Vidi, Vici.* Will cable early to-morrow Pueblo. Returning there.—TAX.'

On the morrow he cabled dramatically:

'5 April, '89: Pueblo.

'To Assert, London:

'Sheridan met me yesterday, train Montevista; drove to ranch . . .[1]; said his offer to go to London and give evidence for 20,000*l.* caused Clan-na-Gael to sentence him to death. Two parties of the Clan were ordered to carry out sentence of the Executive. A member warned him. His life is sought; hence he threatens he will now go to London and prove the "Times" justification. His life is in hourly jeopardy here, two men have been on his track, and he has become desperate and determined to be revenged. He sticks to his terms and price, but demands immediate action, as his death has been ordered. He will go with me after twelfth if he is not killed, and justify the "Times," but demands proof of amount being at my command. Agree upon 10,000*l.*, which is to go to his

[1] I omit words the meaning of which is not intelligible.

family if he is killed before his evidence is given; papers for ranch and stock to be completed; the balance to be paid to order after Commission justifies the "Times." He has all documents to implicate Parnell, Dillon, and others. He is desperate and determined. He showed me documents connecting Parnell and Dillon with himself. If you want me to take him over, you must amend your evidence in court after reading my report as to his refusing any sum to go over to make his life more safe here. If I am to carry it through, place the net amount named to my credit Montreal Bank, Chicago, 500*l.* more for contingencies, and I will have it transferred on notice. If you don't accept he will leave at once for fresh clime, to save his life if he can. He will on the stand and otherwise prove the Parnell letter, and his and others' complicity. Direct reply here to-morrow, Saturday, Colonel Springs.—TAX.'

On April 5 the "Times" replied:

'To Tax, Pueblo:

'Cannot make out part of cable as to terms he wants. Repeat.'

Then the telegrams run on:

'*Kirby to Soames*

'23 April.

'Immediate reply most important.'

'*Soames to Kirby*

'2nd May.

'Am sending you by Saturday's mail. Cable name you use and address.'

'*Soames to Kirby*

'June 19.

'Has he satisfied you as to value of his evidence and existence of confirmatory documents? Reply and I will then cable definitely. Are you satisfied he is acting straight and will go on board with you?'

'*Kirby to Soames*

'20th June.

'Satisfied he will go, as determined to revenge those who ordered his death. Believe he possesses full testimony.'

'*Soames to Kirby* [part in cypher]

'22nd June, '89: London.

'Do not believe in his threat to bolt, nor can we place ourselves entirely in his hands. If risk so great between leaving and ship, it is all the more necessary he should not have documents on him. If he will show you documents, you are satisfied of their value as evidence, and he will hand them over when transfer made and money paid, you may dispense with written statements till he is on ship. If he will not agree to this it means he intends to sell us. Too late to cable money to-day. He gives no reason why he cannot do as asked.'

'*Kirby to Soames*

'2 July, '89.

'Refuses anything in writing until safe away. Swears can and will give evidence to inculpate leaders. Won't sell us, as he wants to go and expose leaders who have condemned him. Has shown me documents in bulk, and has every letter as to League and dynamite. Won't go into details till on ship.'

'Soames to Kirby

'2 July, '89.

'He must satisfy you that he has a number of documents genuine and of value. For all we know, those shown in bulk may be of no importance whatever. His danger is all the more reason why he should satisfy us if he means to go straight. Money deposited and ready to be cabled at moment's notice.'

'Kirby to Soames

'10th July, '89.

'Have only his word that documents in bundle are from members and leaders, implicating all with League and outrage. Won't show me documents till on ship, as his name got in Press before. Think go straight to secure family, as home broken up; life in danger, and wants revenge on leaders who condemn him. But for that would not split.'

These telegrams, as I have said, fell into the hands of the Nationalists. An agent was sent at once to New York to see Sheridan. The agent arrived late one night on the ranch, having ridden I know not how many miles on horseback from the nearest railway station. He found Sheridan and Kirby discussing the 'Times' and the Special Commission over a bottle of whisky. He called Sheridan aside. 'What's all this about?' he asked. 'The wires have been tapped, we know everything. What's your game?' 'What's my game?' said Sheridan. 'Why, I want the "Times" to buy my ranch and give me 25,000*l.* If I get the money, the "Times" may whistle for my evidence. I have nothing to say, and nothing to give.'

The audacity of the proposal sent the agent into a

roar of laughter, and Sheridan joined in the merriment. The former was away betimes in the morning, and in a few days Parnell, sitting in the Commission court, learned that Sheridan was fooling Mr. Soames.

'Once bit, twice shy;' the 'Times' had had its lesson. It did not buy Mr. Sheridan's ranch, that gentleman did not come to London, and he is, so far as I know, still enjoying a pastoral life in the Far West.

On Tuesday, April 30, Parnell himself went into the box. He was subjected to a long and wearisome cross-examination, in the course of which he made but one slip—though a stupid and unaccountable slip. He said that, with the object of misleading the House of Commons, he had stated on January 7, 1881, that secret societies had then ceased to exist in Ireland. It turned out, on reference to 'Hansard,' that Parnell on this occasion was referring only to the Ribbon Societies, and that his statement was true.[1] Next morning I sat by him in court when the matter was put right. 'Why did you say it?' I asked. 'Well,' he answered quite coolly, 'I was not so bad as I thought. It turns out after all that I was not misleading the House. I said what was true.'

'I went,' says Mrs. Sydney Buxton, 'to hear Mr. Parnell examined before the Commission. I was disappointed in Mr. Parnell in one way—I thought

[1] 'As to the suggestion that crime was caused by secret societies, acting in antagonism to the Land League, Mr. Parnell, on January 7, 1881, stated in the House of Commons that secret societies had then ceased to exist in Ireland. Mr. Parnell was then alluding to secret societies other than that of the Fenian conspiracy, and in our judgment Mr. Parnell was accurate when he made that statement.' *Report of Special Commission*, p. 87.

him too discursive. His long explanations give the effect of evasiveness; but I suppose he wants to put them on record. He evidently makes a very good impression on Mr. Justice Hannen, and they are continually beaming on one another. "If you are fatigued, Mr. Parnell, pray be seated," says Mr. Justice Hannen. "I thank your lordship, not at all," says Parnell. All the same, he looks ghastly ill and very nervous. The Attorney-General loses his temper. It is "Attend to me, sir," "Answer my questions, sir," the whole time, while Parnell bows, with a grave courtesy which never seems to desert him. Sometimes they are all talking at once, while Parnell calmly proceeds with his line of argument. He scores off the Attorney-General all round, which makes it a trifle ridiculous when he is continually admonished to "Bring your mind to bear on this question, sir." The only admission got out of him yet is that, when in 1881 he said that "secret societies had ceased to exist in Ireland," he intended to mislead the House of Commons. Very shocking, of course; but I should like to see the Unionists cross-examined on oath as to their intentions, when they say that the power of the agitator is at an end in Ireland, and things of that description. Moreover, when one remembers the tremendous accusations brought against Mr. Parnell, a single instance of an attempt to mislead the House of Commons doesn't seem much to have proved!'

Mr. Cunynghame was one day examining a large box full of letters written to Parnell. Parnell entered the room at the Law Courts while the Secretary was engaged in this work. 'Have you found anything incriminatory?' he asked. 'Well,' answered Mr. Cunynghame, 'the only letter I have found up to the

present which can be said to have any kind of political allusion in it is a letter from you to your sister containing this sentence: "I hear you have painted my room green; please change the colour."'

Though the Commission still dragged its weary length along, almost all interest in its proceedings ceased with the Pigott incident, and ultimately the incriminated members and their counsel retired from the court.

The decisive battle had been fought over the forged letters, and Parnell was triumphant. Nationalists and Liberals turned the defeat of the 'Times' to good account. In Parliament and out of Parliament, Printing House Square was denounced, and the Government were held responsible for the indiscretion of their chief organ in the Press.

One night Mr. Labouchere asked in the House: 'Do any honourable members now think that the letters were genuine?' and there were murmurs which seemed to suggest that some of the occupants of the Tory benches did. Parnell sprang instantly to his feet, and in imperious tones said: 'Sir, I have risen for the purpose of asking this question of the hon. gentlemen opposite. Is there any one of them who will get up in his place, or, sitting in his place, by a shake of his head, or a nod, or a word, will venture to say that he believes that there is any doubt whatever as to the forgery of these letters, which have been alleged to have been signed by me?'

This question, asked with an air of dignity, *hauteur*, and kingliness, produced a deep impression upon the House. The Liberals cheered again and again, and the Tories sank into profound silence.

On March 8 there was a dinner of the 'Eighty Club' at Willis's Rooms. The late Sir Frank Lock-

wood presided. Lord Spencer, Lord Rosebery, and Parnell were present. The Irish leader received a perfect ovation, and when he and Lord Spencer shook hands across Lord Rosebery there was an extraordinary scene of excitement and enthusiasm. 'That was the first time I had met Parnell since his entrance into public life,' says Lord Spencer, 'and then there was what Lord Rosebery called "the historic handshake" between him and me.'

'It was a wonderful scene,' said one who was present. 'But what struck me most was Parnell's indifference to all that went on around him. He did not appear to be in the least moved by the warmth of his reception. He could not have had a more sympathetic audience, but he seemed not to care whether he was in touch with us or not. The man has no heart, I thought. But he made a speech which I have never forgotten. It was courageous and statesmanlike, and summed up the situation with incisive accuracy.'

Parnell, who on rising was received with loud and prolonged cheers, the audience springing to their feet and waving their napkins over their heads, said:

'There is only one way in which you can govern Ireland within the constitution, and that is by allowing her to govern herself in all those matters which cannot interfere with the greatness and well-being of the Empire of which she forms a part. I admit there is another way. That is a way that has not been tried yet. . . . There is a way in which you might obtain at all events some present success in the government of Ireland. It is not Mr. Balfour's bastard plan of a semi-constitutional, a semi-coercive method. You might find among yourselves some great Englishman, or Scotchman, who would go over to Ireland—her parliamentary repre-

sentation having been taken away from her—and would do justice to her people notwithstanding the complaints of Irish landlordism. Such a man might be found who, on the one hand, would oppose a stern front to the inciters of revolution or outrage, and on the other hand would check the exorbitant demands of the governing classes in that country, and perhaps the result might be successful. But it would have to be a method outside the constitution, both on the one side and on the other. Your Irish Governor would have to have full power to check the evil-doer, whether the evil-doer were a lord or a peasant; whether the male-factor hailed from Westminster or New York, the power should be equally exercised and constantly maintained. In that way, perhaps, as I have said, you might govern Ireland for a season. That, in my judgment, from the first time when I entered political life, appeared to me to be the only alternative to the concession to Ireland of full power over her own domestic interests and her future. In one way only, I also saw, could the power and influence of a constitutional party be banded together within the limits of the law; by acting on those principles laid down by Lucas and Gavan Duffy in 1852, that they should hold themselves aloof from all English political parties and combinations, that they should refuse place and office for themselves or for their friends or their relations, and that the Irish constituencies should refuse to return any member who was a traitor to those pledges.'

In July Parnell was presented with the freedom of the city of Edinburgh, and made what Fenians called a 'disgustingly moderate' speech. He said: 'In what way could Ireland, supposing she wished to

injure you, be more powerful to effect injury to your Imperial interests than she is at present? If you concede to her people the power to work out their own future, to make themselves happy and prosperous, how do you make yourselves weaker to withstand wrongdoing against yourselves? Will not your physical capacity be the same as it is now? Will you not still have your troops in the country? Will you not still have all the power of the Empire? . . . In what way do we make you weaker? In what way shall we be stronger to injure you? What soldiers shall we have? What armed policemen shall we have? What cannon shall we have? What single means shall we have, beyond the constitution, that we have not now, to work you injury?'[1]

On November 22 the Special Commission held its last sitting; on February 13, 1890, the report was made.

On that evening Parnell and Mr. Cunynghame had the following conversation in the Lobby of the House of Commons.

Parnell. 'Can you tell me some of the conclusions?'

Mr. Cunynghame. 'Well, I think I might do this provided it is understood they are for your own ear only, and that you will not quote me.'

[1] The proposal to present Parnell with the freedom of Edinburgh led to much controversy in that city. The vote was challenged three times in the Council, but was finally carried by a majority of 22, the whole Council numbering 41 members. Afterwards there was a plébiscite of the inhabitants, the question submitted being: 'Do you wish Mr. Parnell to receive the honour of the freedom of the city of Edinburgh?' 21,014 replies were received, of which 17,813 were in the negative and 3,201 in the affirmative. Thus Parnell received the freedom of the city, though according to the plébiscite there was a majority of the citizens against it.—*Annual Register*, 1889, p. 161.

Parnell. 'What do they find about me, as regards crime?'

Mr. Cunynghame. 'Practically a complete acquittal on all crime for you; Phœnix Park murders and the rest.'

Parnell. 'What about boycotting?'

Mr. Cunynghame. 'They give it as hot as they can to you on that.'

Parnell. 'And how about separation? What do they say about me?'

Mr. Cunynghame. 'That no one on earth can say what your views are, and I think it is not far wrong.'

Parnell. 'What about Davitt?'

Mr. Cunynghame. 'They give it to him pretty well, except that they say he denounced crime honestly. You will be in opposition to him some day.'

Parnell. 'I am not in opposition to him' (very quickly).

Mr. Cunynghame. 'Ah! but I meant if a change took place.'

Parnell. 'Oh, in a Home Rule Parliament that is possible, but he will find Ireland a very bad place for advocating socialistic schemes.'

Mr. Cunynghame. 'Yes; that is what I meant.'

Parnell. 'What about the others?'

Mr. Cunynghame. 'They find several others guilty of entering the movement with a view to separation, but that the Land League movement does not necessarily involve being a complete separatist movement. As to crime, they say that no one plotted it, but that inflammatory speeches and actions were continued notwithstanding the results of them in producing crime were known.'

Parnell. 'Well, really, between ourselves, I think it is just about what I should have said myself.'

So far as what may be called the personal issue between Parnell and the 'Times' was concerned, the Commissioners gave judgment for Parnell on every point. The forged letters, of course, went by the board. But there were three other specific charges against the Irish leader which the Commissioners emphatically dismissed.

'There remain,' says the report, 'three specific charges against Mr. Parnell, namely:

'(*a*) That at the time of the Kilmainham negotiations Mr. Parnell knew that Sheridan and Boyton had been organising outrage, and therefore wished to use them to put down outrage.

'We find that this charge has not been proved.

'(*b*) That Mr. Parnell was intimate with the leading Invincibles, that he probably learned from them what they were about when he was released on *parole* in April 1882, and that he recognised the Phœnix Park murders as their handiwork.

'We find that there is no foundation for this charge. We have already stated that the Invincibles were not a branch of the Land League.

'(*c*) That Mr. Parnell, on January 23, 1883, by an opportune remittance, enabled F. Byrne to escape from justice to France.

'We find that Mr. Parnell did not make any remittance to enable F. Byrne to escape from justice.'

So far as the issue between the 'Times' and the Irish members generally is concerned, I have thought it right to set out the 'conclusions' of the Commissioners in an Appendix. On reference to these

'conclusions' the reader will see that in some instances the Commissioners found for the 'Times,' in others for the Irish members.[1]

In fine, Parnell had weathered the storm. But the gleams of sunshine which once more fell upon his path were dimmed by the shadow of coming disaster.

[1] Appendix. The sum subscribed to cover the expenses of the Irish members was 42,000*l.*—*Annual Register*, 1890, p. 74.

CHAPTER XXII

A NEW TROUBLE

Parnell's career, from his entrance into public life in 1875 until the beginning of 1890, had been almost an unbroken record of success. He had silenced faction, quelled dissensions, put down rivalries, reconciled opposing forces, combined Constitutionalists and Revolutionists, healed the ancient feud between Church and Fenians, and organised and disciplined the most formidable parliamentary army that a statesman ever led—in a word, he had united the Irish race all the world over, and placed himself at the head, not merely of a party, but of a nation. He had defeated almost all his enemies in detail. Forster had been crushed, the Pope repulsed, Mr. Gladstone conquered, the 'Times' overthrown, the Tories shaken, the Liberals scattered or subdued. No man, no party, no force which had come into conflict with him escaped unscathed.

It even looked as if the reverse of 1886 would be immediately wiped out, and that England, under the magic of Mr. Gladstone's influence, would at length grant the uttermost demands of the Irish leader.[1] In

[1] At the General Election the Government majority was 114. It had steadily been sinking year by year, since in 1887 it was 106; in 1888 it was 88; in 1889 it was 79; in 1890 it was 70 (*Pall Mall Gazette*, June 27, 1888, and *Annual Register*, 1890, p. 40).

the opening days of 1890 he had, indeed, reached the highest pinnacle of his fame; he seemed to be invincible. Yet he was standing on a mine, and while the air still rang with the rejoicing which hailed his latest triumph the train was fired, his doom was sealed.

On December 24, 1889, Captain O'Shea filed a petition for divorce on the grounds of his wife's adultery with Parnell. I repeat that I do not think it is my duty to enter into the details of this unfortunate suit. Mrs. Charles Stewart Parnell and her children are still alive. I must consider her and them. I shall not dwell on a subject full of sorrow and pain to both. The diary of a good and brave Englishwoman lies before me. She had met Parnell, and, like so many others, had fallen under the spell of his wonderful personality. The proceedings in the Divorce Court shocked and scandalised her; yet with her feelings of regret and pain were mingled the recollections of Parnell's public services, and of the trials and persecutions which he had borne for his country's sake. On October 7, 1891, when the news of his death was flashed throughout the land, sorrow for his tragic fate overshadowed every other thought, and she closed her diary that day with the simple words: 'We mean to forget all the last year. I shall always think of him as a fine man, and be proud to have known him.'

With these words I shall pass lightly over the proceedings in the Divorce Court, and consider only their effect on the public life of Parnell.

In December he was served with a copy of the petition in 'O'Shea *v.* O'Shea and Parnell.'

'I saw him at Mr. Lewis's,' says the gentleman who acted for Captain O'Shea. 'On coming into

the room I found him sitting on the lounge. "Mr. Parnell, I think," I said. "Yes," he said, with the air of quiet unconcern which surprised me. Then, stretching out his hands, he added: "I think you have got some papers for me." I replied, "Yes," and put the papers in his hand. "There, Mr. Lewis," he said, flinging the papers carelessly on the table. "Now," he said, turning to me, "is there anything else?" I said "No," and withdrew. I was astonished at his coolness. Here was an affair of the greatest gravity, something to frighten any man—above all, a man in public life. But he tossed the papers on the table as if it were some trumpery business not worth his personal attention. He was polite and courteous, but when he asked me if there were "anything else" the plain meaning of his words was: "Now get out."'

The session of 1890 was hopelessly dull. People were looking forward to the General Election, and troubled themselves little about the proceedings in the House of Commons. Public interest centred chiefly in Parnell. In the first months of the year the report of the Special Commission attracted general attention. It was debated in Parliament, discussed in the country, talked about everywhere. Then interest in the subject flagged. But Parnell was still the central figure in the public mind. People had no sooner ceased to talk and think about the Special Commission than they began to talk and think about the 'O'Shea divorce case.'

In the autumn I met an Irish member, who asked: 'What do you think will be the upshot of the divorce case?' I said: 'I do not know. What will you Irish members do, suppose it turns out badly?' He answered: 'What will we do? Why, of course stick

to Parnell. What do you think would make us give him up?' In justice to this member I must say he did stick to Parnell to the end.

Some weeks later I met a distinguished member of the Liberal party. He said: 'What will happen if the divorce proceedings end, which is not unlikely, unfavourably to Parnell?' I replied: 'I fancy the Irish members will stick to him whatever happens, however it ends.' He said: 'Yes, that is likely; but what will the Irish people do?' I replied: 'Oh, the Irish people will stand by him if there is no division among the members, you may be quite sure of that.' He said: 'I think that is likely enough.' 'But,' he added, 'what will the Church do? There is the difficulty.' I said: 'Yes, if the people stand by Parnell I think the Church will be placed in a very difficult position. The bishops may find themselves obliged to withdraw for a time from the movement. That, I think, would be a preferable course, and a more likely course, than to fight the people.' 'Well,' my friend replied, 'it may be so. I do not know; but there will be many difficulties in the case.' I then said: 'What will you do?' 'If you mean me personally,' he answered, 'I will do nothing. It does not concern me.' I said: 'What will the Liberal party do?' He answered: 'I do not really see what affair it is of the Liberal party. It is a matter for you Irish.' 'Well, then,' I replied, 'if that be so, if you do nothing on this side, Parnell is safe.' And so our talk ended.

On Saturday, November 15, the trial began. There was no defence, and on Monday the 17th the court granted a decree *nisi* for the separation of Captain and Mrs. O'Shea.

It is needless to say that the Tory leaders and the Tory Press, still wincing under the Pigott *exposé*, eagerly seized the new weapon so opportunely placed in their hands for the destruction of the man whom they hated and feared. The 'Times' was now to have its revenge.

But how was the news received in Irish and Liberal political circles?

I shall let Irish and Liberal politicians themselves answer this question.

On Tuesday, November 18, there was a meeting of the National League in Dublin. Mr. John Redmond presided; he was supported by Mr. Swift MacNeill, M.P., Mr. Donal Sullivan, M.P., Mr. Leahy, M.P., Mr. Clancy, M.P., Mr. Leamy, M.P., Mr. W. Redmond, M.P., Dr. Kenny, M.P., and other prominent politicians. A resolution pledging the meeting to stand by Parnell, despite the proceedings in the Divorce Court, was carried by acclamation. Mr. Swift MacNeill and Mr. Donal Sullivan gave expression to the general opinion in the following words:

Mr. Swift MacNeill: 'The first thing I desire to say is to express from the depths of my heart my unswerving affection and allegiance to Mr. Parnell. God forbid that he who led us in time of difficulty should be deserted by us in cloudy and dark days. I esteemed it as a great honour and privilege to stand beside Mr. Parnell when he made his first speech, fifteen or sixteen years ago, and I know no higher honour than to stand by Mr. Parnell when he makes his first speech in the Parliament in College Green.'

Mr. Donal Sullivan: 'I cannot allow the opportunity to pass without expressing my confidence in the leader of the Irish parliamentary party. I have

recently come from a visit to my constituents in County Westmeath, and I can say that both in the north and south of the county the desire of the people is that, come weal or woe, as long as I have the honour to represent Westmeath, I shall fight by the side of our great leader, and shall never falter in his ranks.'

On the same day the following paragraph appeared in the London letter of the 'Freeman's Journal.'

'I have direct authority for stating that Mr. Parnell has not the remotest intention of abandoning, either permanently or temporarily, his position or his duties as leader of the Irish parliamentary party. This may be implicitly accepted as Mr. Parnell's firm resolution, and perhaps by learning it in time the Pigottist Press may be spared the humiliation of indulging in a prolonged outburst of useless vilification. In arriving at this determination, I need not say that Mr. Parnell is actuated exclusively by a sense of his responsibility to the Irish people, by whose suffrages he holds his public position, and who alone have the power or the right to influence his public action. The wild, unscrupulous, and insincere shriekings of the Pigottists on the platform and in the Press can and will do nothing to alter Mr. Parnell's resolve.'

On Wednesday, the 19th, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, M.P., Mr. William O'Brien, M.P., and Mr. John Dillon, M.P. (who had some time previously been sent with Mr. Harrington and Mr. T. D. Sullivan to America as delegates to raise funds for the national cause), were interviewed, and all three strongly declared their unfaltering allegiance to the Chief.

Mr. T. P. O'Connor. 'It is for the Irish alone to choose their leader, and, besides, all English statesmen acknowledge that Mr. Parnell is the greatest parlia-

mentary leader that the Irish ever had. His disappearance from that post would create dismay among the Nationalists.'

Mr. William O'Brien. 'Speaking as an individual, I will stand firmly by Parnell, and there is no reason why I should not.'

Mr. Dillon. 'I can see nothing in what has occurred to alter the leadership of the Irish party in the House of Commons. A change would be a disaster.'

'Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Dillon, and I,' says Mr. T. D. Sullivan, 'having journeyed from Boston, arrived at Buffalo and put up at Hotel Iroquois. Scarcely had we got inside the precincts when a number of reporters were upon us, pencil and paper in hand, to ascertain our views of the Parnell crisis. None of us had any wish to be interviewed on that painful subject, but it would have been unwise to meet those Press representatives with a blank refusal. In reply to their inquiries, Mr. Dillon and Mr. O'Brien expressed themselves strongly in favour of a continuance of Mr. Parnell's leadership. The question was then put to me. My reply was that my colleagues had spoken for themselves, and for my part I preferred to say nothing on the subject at present. The pressmen then left. Shortly afterwards a message was brought to me that Messrs. Dillon and O'Brien wished to see me in a sitting-room upstairs. Thither I went, and saw before me those two gentlemen with very grave faces and evidently in much mental trouble. They soon informed me that by my conduct in not allowing their opinions to be taken as mine also I had in all likelihood done a terrific injury to the Irish national cause. It is needless to say that the more eloquent gentleman of the two on this topic was Mr. O'Brien. The responsibility I had incurred, they said,

was tremendous. I had let those sharp American pressmen see that I was not entirely of one mind with Mr. Dillon and Mr. O'Brien; it was splendid copy for them, just the sort of thing they wanted—evidence of disunion among the delegates. "Oh, they fished for it, they fished for it," said Mr. O'Brien, "and they got it." '

On the same day, November 19, Mr. Labouchere declared boldly for Parnell. Writing in 'Truth,' the brilliant Radical journalist said: 'It is not for the English to decide who the Irish leader is to be. This concerns the Irish alone. My advice, if I might take the liberty to tender it, to Mr. Parnell is that he should not be diverted from the task he has set himself, to free his people, by anything that has occurred or may occur. When Parliament meets I trust that he will be in his seat, and that, utterly ignoring the vilifications and abuse of those who before tried to crush him under false charges, he will devote himself with singleness of purpose to his patriotic tasks.'

On Thursday, November 20, there was a great meeting of Irish Nationalists and Liberals in the Leinster Hall, Dublin.

'Healy,' says Mr. William Redmond, 'was at the time ill. Kenny, Jack, and I went to see him, and to have a talk about the coming meeting. "Have any resolutions been prepared?" he asked. We said, "No." "Then," says he, "give me a sheet of paper and I will write them. We'll teach these d——d Nonconformists to mind their own business," and he wrote the resolutions there and then. He next said: "Wire for Justin," and we wired.' Mr. Healy, despite his indisposition, attended the Leinster Hall meeting, which was a large and representative gathering of Nationalist members. At the commencement of the proceedings

the following cable from the American delegates was read.

'We stand firmly by the leadership of the man who has brought the Irish people through unparalleled difficulties and dangers, from servitude and despair to the very threshold of emancipation, with a genius, courage, and success unequalled in our history. We do so, not only on the ground of gratitude for those imperishable services in the past, but in the profound conviction that Parnell's statesmanship and matchless qualities as a leader are essential to the safety of our cause.'

This cablegram was signed by Mr. John Dillon, Mr. William O'Brien, Mr. T. Harrington, and Mr. T. P. O'Connor. Mr. T. D. Sullivan refused to sign it.

The cablegram having been read amid enthusiastic cheering, Mr. Justin McCarthy proposed the following resolution, which was carried by acclamation:

'That this meeting, interpreting the sentiment of the Irish people that no side issue shall be permitted to obstruct the progress of the great cause of Home Rule for Ireland, declares that in all political matters Mr. Parnell possesses the confidence of the Irish nation, and that this meeting rejoices at the determination of the Irish parliamentary party to stand by their leader.'

Speeches in the spirit of the resolution were then made. I will give a few extracts:

Mr. McCarthy. 'I ask you, suppose a man has gone morally wrong in some case, whatever temptation we know not, is that the least reason to excuse him from doing his duty to the people whom he is leading to victory? (Applause.) Is it the least reason why, because he may have gone wrong in some private question, he should fail in his duty to lead his people

in some great question of national and of public importance? Can we say to that man: "We can do without you?" ("No.") We know we cannot say it —we cannot possibly say it. (Applause.) We say to him: "We want you to lead us, as you have done; and we recognise no reason why you should be exempted from the great public duty of leading the Irish party and the Irish people to a public victory."' (Applause.)

Mr. Healy. 'I would say this further, that we must remember that for Ireland and for Irishmen Mr. Parnell is less a man than an institution. ("Hear, hear.") We have under the shadow of his name secured for Ireland a power and authority in the councils of Great Britain and the world such as we never possessed before—(applause); and when I see a demand made for retirement and resignation I ask you to remember the futility thereof. Were Mr. Parnell to-morrow to resign his seat for Cork, he would instantly be re-elected. (Applause.) . . . I say it would be foolish and absurd in the highest degree were we, at a moment like this, because of a temporary outcry over a case that in London would be forgotten to-morrow if there were a repetition of the Whitechapel murders. . . . I say we would be foolish and criminal if we, the seasoned politicians who have seen and who have been able to watch the vagaries and tempests of political passages—if we, upon an occasion of this kind, at the very first blast of opposition, surrendered the great Chief who has led us so far forward. (Renewed applause.) If we, who have been for ten years under the leadership of this man, and who have been accused of harbouring all kinds of sinister ambitions and greedy desires to pull him down, if we join with this howling

pack, would that be a noble spectacle before the nations?'

The McDermott. 'We are at present in a political strife, and we refuse to intermingle with it considerations which are only suggested for our destruction. Were the soldiers of the Nile and the soldiers of Waterloo to stand still in the moment of combative battle to inquire whether their commander had observed one of the Ten Commandments?'

On November 20 Mr. T. P. O'Connor and Mr. Dillon were again interviewed.

Mr. T. P. O'Connor. 'Mr. Parnell has done too much for the Irish people for them to go back on him now. I declare that the whole Irish people will support the envoys in upholding Mr. Parnell, and there is convincing proof that Ireland is socially, enthusiastically, and fiercely on the side of the Irish leader.'

Mr. Dillon. 'I do not think the priests will ask the people to abandon the movement if Mr. Parnell remains the leader of the party. One cablegram from Europe reports me as saying that Mr. Parnell will have to retire. It is all moonshine. I have the utmost confidence in him.'

On Friday, November 21, Mr. Pritchard Morgan, M.P., wrote to the 'Freeman's Journal': 'I would remind [Mr. Parnell's] political opponents, particularly his leading opponents, who are crying aloud for his retirement, of the Scriptural injunction, "He that is without sin amongst you, let him cast the first stone." The conduct of Mr. Parnell's political opponents clearly indicates that chivalry in politics is an unknown quality, that cunning and intrigue have taken its place.'

On Saturday, November 22, Mr. Jacob Bright

wrote to the 'Manchester Guardian': 'You appear to recommend that Mr. Parnell should retire for a time from public life. I take a different view. I think it is his duty to remain at his post. If a man commits a grave fault, the best atonement he can make is to do all the good he can in the direction clearly indicated by his own talents and experience. The place where Mr. Parnell can render service to his country and ours is in the House of Commons.

'That the Irish people should cling to the man who has rendered them immeasurable service, that they should decline to sit in judgment upon him, gives me unalloyed pleasure. They can do this without any suspicion as to their motive, because they are the purest nation upon earth.'

On November 24 Mr. Illingworth addressed a public meeting in Bradford. He said: 'Mr. Parnell has rendered great service to the Irish people and the cause of Home Rule. He has piloted Home Rule nearly into its haven. Would the passengers of a vessel from America, which had been skilfully manœuvred through many dangers and navigated through many storms, depose the captain while yet the ship had to be threaded through the crowded sea and the Mersey, because they heard on the voyage that the captain had been guilty of a moral offence?'

Amid this chorus of friendly opinion three jarring notes were struck:

(1) By the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, in the 'Methodist Times';

(2) By Mr. Stead, in the 'Pall Mall Gazette'; and

(3) By Mr. Davitt, in the 'Labour World.'

All three took their stand on the moral question, and said, in effect, 'Mr. Parnell must go.'

On Friday, November 21, the National Liberal Federation met at Sheffield. There was no public expression of opinion, but there were rumours of disapproval in private, and strong representations were made to Mr. Morley—who attended the meeting—that the Nonconformists would insist on Parnell's resignation. Mr. Morley, on his return to London, saw Mr. Gladstone, and reported what he had seen and heard, and said that Parnell's leadership had become impossible. Sir William Harcourt, who had also been at Sheffield, supported Mr. Morley. Mr. Gladstone was impressed by what his colleagues told him, and he resolved to abandon Parnell.

On Sunday, November 23, the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes made an oracular statement at a gathering at St. James's Hall. He said: 'I have high authority for saying that Mr. Gladstone will intervene, and Mr. Parnell will recognise his voice as one to be obeyed.'

On Monday, the 24th, the day before the meeting of Parliament, Mr. Gladstone came to London. He sent immediately for Mr. Justin McCarthy, who called upon him at 1 Carlton House Terrace. Mr. McCarthy has given me an account of what passed.

'Mr. Gladstone said that Parnell had offered to consult him after the Phœnix Park murders, and asked me if I thought that Parnell would consult him again now. I said I did not know. Gladstone said that the Liberals might lose the General Election if Parnell remained leader of the Irish party. He did not ask that Parnell should resign. He did not show me any letter. He did not at our meeting ask me to convey anything to Parnell, and, besides, I should not have done it at his bidding. It was a matter for us to settle without the interference of Mr. Gladstone or any Englishman.'

Mr. Gladstone now took instant action. On November 24 he wrote his famous letter to Mr. Morley. I shall quote the most pregnant sentences of the fateful document:

'. . . While clinging to the hope of communication from Mr. Parnell to whomsoever addressed, I thought it necessary, viewing the arrangements for the commencement of the session to-morrow, to acquaint Mr. McCarthy with the conclusion at which, after using all the means of observation and reflection in my power, I had myself arrived. It was that, notwithstanding the splendid services rendered by Mr. Parnell to his country, his continuance at the present moment in the leadership would be productive of consequences disastrous in the highest degree to the cause of Ireland.

'*I think I may be warranted in asking you so far to expand the conclusion I have given above as to add that the continuance I speak of would not only place many hearty and effective friends of the Irish cause in a position of great embarrassment, but would render my retention of the leadership of the Liberal party, based as it has been mainly upon the presentation of the Irish cause, almost a nullity.*'[1]

While Mr. Morley was in search of Parnell to show him Mr. Gladstone's manifesto, the Irish members met at a quarter to one o'clock on Tuesday afternoon, November 25, at Committee Room 15, in the House of Commons, to elect a sessional chairman.[2]

The 'Freeman's Journal' has described how Parnell

[1] The italics are mine.

[2] The constitutional title of the Irish leader was 'Sessional Chairman' of the Irish parliamentary party. He was elected at the beginning of each session of Parliament.

was received by his parliamentary colleagues as he entered the room, looking as calm and unconcerned as usual. 'The welcome accorded to the national leader was enthusiastic in the extreme. Loud cheers were given as he entered the room, and much hand-shaking and many assurances of continued allegiance preceded the business of the day. Mr. McCarthy proposed that Mr. Richard Power take the chair. The first business was then the re-election of Mr. Parnell as chairman of the party, which was proposed by Mr. Sexton, seconded by Colonel Nolan, and agreed to amid loud applause. Mr. Parnell thanked the meeting for this further and fresh proof of their confidence in him, and stated that, in response to their unanimous desire, he would continue to discharge the duties of leader.'

'How did Mr. Parnell look when he came to your meeting?' an Irish member was asked by an English Radical. 'Well,' said the Irish member, 'he looked as if we had committed adultery with his wife.'

On Tuesday afternoon, then, the Irish parliamentary party re-elected Mr. Parnell as sessional chairman with every expression of regard and confidence. The moral offence was condoned. The Irish members, endorsing the views previously expressed at the Leinster Hall meeting and by the American delegates, declared unanimously and enthusiastically that, come weal, come woe, they would stand by the man who had again and again led them to victory, affirming, in effect, that his public life should not be cut short by his private transgressions as exposed in the proceedings of the Divorce Court.

'When I left the committee-room,' says Mr. Pierce Mahony, M.P., 'Sir William Harcourt came up to me and said: "You have done a nice thing. You have

re-elected Parnell after Mr. Gladstone's letter." I said: "We have not seen Mr. Gladstone's letter. What do you mean?" Harcourt said: "Why, Mr. Gladstone wrote saying he could not remain leader of the Liberal party if Parnell were re-elected, and you will see the letter in the evening papers." '

In the evening a rumour ran through the Lobby of the House of Commons that Mr. Gladstone had written a letter to Mr. Morley on the crisis. This was followed by a second and graver rumour that that letter had been sent to the Press.

'I was sitting,' says Professor Stuart, 'in the passage leading from the central hall into the Lobby when Sexton rushed up to me and said: "Is it true that Gladstone has written a letter about Parnell, and that it has been sent to the Press?" I replied: "I don't know; I have heard nothing about it." He urged me to try and find out, and I said I certainly would. My recollection about what afterwards happened is not very clear, but I think I first sent someone to the Press Gallery to find out. Afterwards I believe I went to the gallery myself and saw one of the pressmen, and learned that Gladstone had, as Sexton said, written to Morley, and that the letter had actually been given to the Press. I got the letter in "flimsy," and brought it to the Irish members. Then we all went to the Conference-room, where the letter was read. The Irishmen were thrown into great distress, and I felt that I ought not to remain with them, so I came away.'

'The publication of Gladstone's letter was certainly a mistake,' a distinguished Liberal has said to me, 'not the writing it. It was quite right for Mr. Gladstone to put his views before Parnell, but these views ought

not to have been *published*. The publication of them could only have irritated Parnell and suggested English dictation; though I am satisfied Mr. Gladstone never meant to dictate. The letter itself was perfectly proper; it could not have been couched in more suitable language, and I feel that as a private communication Parnell would not have objected to it. He was far too sensible a man for that. The publication was the *sting*. But how did it come to be published? Did Mr. Gladstone authorise its publication? Someone, I admit, has blundered! Who?'

I think I can answer this question. 'Gladstone's letter,' says Mr. William Pitt, of the Press Association, 'was dictated to me by Mr. Arnold Morley[1] in the whips' room in the House of Commons. I went immediately to the Press smoking-room, and began to write it out from my shorthand notes. When I had sent away a good part of it to the Press Association Office in Wine Office Court, Professor Stuart came up and asked me to stop its publication. I asked him for his authority, and said I was publishing it on the authority of the chief Liberal whip. I asked Professor Stuart to get Mr. Gladstone's authority to stop the publication. He then went away, and I saw him no more. As a matter of fact, at the time that Professor Stuart intervened part of the letter was probably in some of the newspaper offices, and it was then scarcely possible to stop the publication.'[2]

'After the publication of the letter,' says Mr. Pierce Mahony, 'a number of us wrote a letter to Parnell saying that we thought it might be judicious for him to retire for a time, but that whatever he did we would

[1] Mr. Morley was chief Liberal whip.
[2] Communicated to Mr. Tuohy, of the *Freeman's Journal*.

stick by him. He then saw us all at the Westminster Palace Hotel. Justin McCarthy was present. Parnell said: "I will retire if Gladstone says in writing that he will give the Irish Parliament control of the police and of the land, unless the English Parliament settles it first. Now, I don't want him to write that letter to me; let him write it to Justin McCarthy." And then he turned to Justin and said, with a grim smile, "And Justin, when you get the letter, I advise you to put it in a glass case."'

The simple truth is that the letter was published by the express orders of Mr. Gladstone, given to Mr. John Morley and conveyed by him to Mr. Arnold Morley. It was the opinion of many Liberals then, and it is the opinion of many Liberals still, that the publication of the letter—published with indecent haste—was a gross blunder, calculated to exasperate the situation and increase the difficulties of a peaceful settlement. Whatever might have been Mr. Gladstone's intentions, it was received as an *ultimatum* throughout the three kingdoms, and as an *ultimatum* was resented and defied by the proud, unbending Irish Chief. That letter drove every Irish Nationalist who had not been demoralised by agrarianism, or Liberalism, to the side of Parnell.

'To me,' an Irish Nationalist said, 'the question now was one between an Englishman and an Irishman, and of course I flung myself upon the side of my own countryman. It did not matter a rush to me whether he was right or wrong the moment that issue was raised.'

'I did not trouble myself much about the matter, said an old Fenian leader, 'until the Grand Old Man interfered. Of course the divorce business was

horrible, but was it worse than all that had been going on for the past ten years—outrages, murders, boycotting, the Plan of Campaign, New Tipperary, and everything that was criminal and idiotic?—and yet these Liberals surrendered to this kind of thing, practically condoned the whole business, and were coming in shoals to Ireland, encouraging every madcap in the country in every immoral and insane plan he could think of—and then suddenly they get a fit of virtue over this divorce affair. These English are the most extraordinary people in the world. You never can make out what is virtue or what is not virtue with them, except mainly that virtue is always on their side, whatever their side is. Well, the divorce case was nothing to me. It was for the Grand Young Man to get out of his scrape as well as he could. I was not going to trouble my head about him. But when the Grand Old Man interfered, that gave a new aspect to the affair. It then became a question of submitting to the dictation of an Englishman, and for the first time I resolved to support Parnell.'

On the morning of November 26 I read Mr. Gladstone's letter in the 'Standard.' I felt at once that it would cause a split in the ranks of the Parliamentarians, and I hastened to the Irish Press Agency to hear the worst. There I soon learned that my anticipations were only too well founded. I met a prominent member of the parliamentary party, who was sorely distressed at the new development. I said: 'Will this letter of Mr. Gladstone's make any difference to your people?' He answered, with a melancholy smile, 'I should think it will.'

I said: 'Do you mean that you will give up Parnell because Mr. Gladstone has written this letter?'

Irish member. 'I don't know what will be done until the party meets to-day. But the letter was a shock to our people last night.'

'Well, what do your people now say?'

Irish member. 'They say that Gladstone will retire from the leadership of the Liberal party if Parnell does not retire from the leadership of the Irish party.'

'As a matter of fact, does Gladstone say so much?' [and I quoted the sentence I have put in italics in Mr. Gladstone's letter].

Irish member. 'Oh, he *means* that. Of course he never says anything clearly. But every Irish member believes that the meaning of the letter is what I say.'

'And you are going to fling Parnell overboard because Mr. Gladstone tells you?'

Irish member. 'Well, for myself I will stand by Parnell, but let me put the view of many of our men to you. We have been telling the Irish people to trust in Mr. Gladstone and the Liberal party. We have said that when the Liberals come back to office they will restore the evicted tenants, pass a new Land Act, and grant Home Rule. Now, if we go back, and say we have broken with the Liberal party, we have broken with Mr. Gladstone, what will the people say to us? That is the fix we are in.'

I said: 'Let me put the case in another way to you. You have all condoned Parnell's moral offence; you have had your Leinster Hall meeting, your cables from the American delegates, the meeting of the parliamentary party, the enthusiastic re-election of Parnell as leader. And now, in an instant, at the bidding of an Englishman, you eat your own words and you abandon your own leader! What do you think every self-respecting man in the world will say of you when you have done this

thing? Why, that you are cowards, that you have no self-reliance, that you do not deserve freedom. I think I am better affected towards Mr. Gladstone and the Liberal party than any of you. But Parnell is of more importance to Ireland than Mr. Gladstone and the Liberal party, and for that matter than the Irish party too, all put together. Let him go, and Home Rule will go with him for this generation.'

Irish member. 'Well, come to-morrow and we will know more.'

I called on the morrow. I had seen by the morning papers that the Irish party had met to reconsider the question of Parnell's leadership, but had adjourned without coming to any definite decision.

'Well,' I said to my friend at the agency, 'why did you not settle the question yesterday?' 'Because,' he answered, 'if we had settled the question Parnell would no longer be leader of the Irish party. We [Parnellites] forced an adjournment to get time. It is a bad business, and you may take it from me now Parnell is going to be beaten.'

This is what actually happened at the meeting of the party on the 26th. When the party had been some time in the room Parnell entered, and went straight to the chair, looking calm, unconcerned, imperious. Mr. Barry immediately rose and asked whether in the light of Mr. Gladstone's letter it would not be the wisest course for Mr. Parnell to retire for a period from the leadership of the party.

Dr. Commins felt that expediency demanded that Parnell should adopt this course, at any rate for a time.

Mr. Justin McCarthy said that, having read Mr. Gladstone's letter, he had come to the conclusion that

the situation had undergone a material change since the previous day, and ought now to be reconsidered.

Mr. Sexton took the same view, suggesting that every member of the party should be asked his opinion on the question.

Colonel Nolan urged Parnell to stand to his guns and to tolerate the dictation of no English party leader.

Mr. Lane and Mr. Sheehy said that in the interest of the tenants on the Smith-Barry and Ponsonby estate Parnell ought to retire. Finally, it was agreed that the meeting should adjourn until Monday, December 1.

Parnell sat silently all the time, listening attentively but speaking not a word. Then he left the chair and the room.

What effect had Mr. Gladstone's manifesto on the American delegates? On Mr. T. D. Sullivan it had little effect. He had already taken his stand on moral grounds, and there he remained. On Mr. Harrington it had no effect. He had decided to support Parnell on political grounds, and he was not to be blown from his position by the breath of any Englishman. But Mr. Dillon, Mr. William O'Brien, and Mr. T. P. O'Connor determined on the instant to abandon the Irish Chief at the bidding of the Liberal leader. 'Of course we must obey' one of the delegates wired to another on the appearance of the Liberal *ultimatum*. Mr. Dillon, Mr. O'Brien, Mr. T. P. O'Connor 'obeyed.' Parnell suspected that Mr. Gladstone's letter would produce the same effect on the American delegates as it had produced on his other parliamentary colleagues, and accordingly he cabled to Mr. Dillon and to Mr. O'Brien urging them to take no steps until they had read a manifesto, which he would issue immediately.

CHAPTER XXIII

AT BAY

On Friday night, November 28, a dramatic scene took place at the apartments of an Irish member, Dr. Fitzgerald, in Chester Place, near Victoria Station. Parnell summoned a number of his colleagues on whom he felt he could rely to meet him at Dr. Fitzgerald's quarters; among others, Mr. John Redmond, Mr. William Redmond, Mr. J. J. O'Kelly, Mr. Leamy, Colonel Nolan, came. It was about ten o'clock at night. They found Parnell seated at a table with many sheets of manuscript before him. 'Well,' he said, as his friends gathered around him, 'if we go down we shall go down with our flag flying. I have written a paper which I shall send to the Press to-night. Before sending it I wish to read it to you.' Then, after a pause, he added, 'I think Justin McCarthy ought to be here. He ought to know that I am doing this. Let someone go for him.'

Mr. William Redmond then went for Mr. McCarthy, who soon arrived. On his taking a seat Parnell said: 'I have written a public letter, McCarthy, which I think you ought to hear before it goes to the Press,' and without further words he read slowly and deliberately, while all listened in dead silence.

'*To the People of Ireland*

'The integrity and independence of a section of the Irish parliamentary party having been sapped and destroyed[1] by the wirepullers of the English Liberal party, it has become necessary for me, as the leader of the Irish nation, to take counsel with you, and, having given you the knowledge which is in my possession, to ask your judgment upon a matter which now solely devolves upon you to decide.

'The letter of Mr. Gladstone to Mr. Morley, written for the purpose of influencing the decision of the Irish party in the choice of their leader, and claiming for the Liberal party and their leaders the right of veto upon that choice, is the immediate cause of this address to you, to remind you and your parliamentary representatives that Ireland considers the independence of her party as her only safeguard within the constitution, and above and beyond all other considerations whatever. The threat in that letter, repeated so insolently on many English platforms and in numerous British newspapers, that unless Ireland concedes this right of veto to England she will indefinitely postpone her chances of obtaining Home Rule, compels me, while not for one moment admitting the slightest probability of such loss, to put before you information which until now, so far as my colleagues are concerned, has been solely in my possession, and which will enable you to understand the measure of the loss with which you are threatened unless you consent to throw me to the English wolves now howling for my destruction.

[1] On December 3, at the meeting of the Irish party, Mr. Parnell declared that this sentence should read '*apparently* sapped and undermined.

'In November of last year, in response to a repeated and long-standing request, I visited Mr. Gladstone at Hawarden, and received the details of the intended proposals of himself and his colleagues of the late Liberal Cabinet with regard to Home Rule, in the event of the next general election favouring the Liberal party.

'It is unnecessary for me to do more at present than to direct your attention to certain points of these details, which will be generally recognised as embracing elements vital for your information and the formation of your judgment. These vital points of difficulty may be suitably arranged and considered under the following heads:

'(1) The retention of the Irish members in the Imperial Parliament.

'(2) The settlement of the land or agrarian difficulty in Ireland.

'(3) The control of the Irish constabulary.

'(4) The appointment of the judiciary (including judges of the supreme court, county court judges, and resident magistrates).

'Upon the subject of the retention of the Irish members in the Imperial Parliament Mr. Gladstone told me that the opinion, and the unanimous opinion, of his colleagues and himself, recently arrived at after most mature consideration of alternative proposals, was that, in order to conciliate English public opinion, it would be necessary to reduce the Irish representation from 103 to 32.

'Upon the settlement of the land it was held that this was one of the questions which must be regarded as questions reserved from the control of the Irish Legislature, but, at the same time, Mr. Gladstone

intimated that, while he would renew his attempt to settle the matter by Imperial legislation on the lines of the Land Purchase Bill of 1886, he would not undertake to put any pressure upon his own side or insist upon their adopting his views—in other and shorter words, that the Irish Legislature was not to be given the power of solving the agrarian difficulty, and that the Imperial Parliament would not.

'With regard to the control of the Irish constabulary, it was stated by Mr. Gladstone that, having regard to the necessity for conciliating English public opinion, he and his colleagues felt that it would be necessary to leave this force and the appointment of its officers under the control of the Imperial authority for an indefinite period, while the funds for its maintenance, payment, and equipment would be compulsorily provided out of Irish resources.

'The period of ten or twelve years was suggested as the limit of time during which the appointment of judges, resident magistrates, &c., should be retained in the hands of the Imperial authority.

'I have now given a short account of what I gathered of Mr. Gladstone's views and those of his colleagues during two hours' conversation at Hawarden —a conversation which, I am bound to admit, was mainly monopolised by Mr. Gladstone—and pass to my own expressions of opinion upon these communications, which represent my views then and now.

'And, first, with regard to the retention of the Irish members, the position I have always adopted, and then represented, is that, with the concession of full powers to the Irish Legislature equivalent to those enjoyed by a State of the American Union, the number and position of the members so retained would become a

question of Imperial concern, and not of pressing or immediate importance for the interests of Ireland. But that with the important and all-engrossing subjects of agrarian reform, constabulary control, and judiciary appointments left either under Imperial control or totally unprovided for, it would be the height of madness for any Irish leader to imitate Grattan's example and consent to disband the army which had cleared the way to victory.

'I further undertook to use every legitimate influence to reconcile Irish public opinion to a gradual coming into force of the new privileges, and to the postponements necessary for English opinion with regard to constabulary control and judicial appointments, but strongly dissented from the proposed reduction of members during the interval of probation. I pointed to the absence of any suitable prospect of land settlement by either Parliament as constituting an overwhelming drag upon the prospects of permanent peace and prosperity in Ireland.

'At the conclusion of the interview I was informed that Mr. Gladstone and all his colleagues were entirely agreed that, pending the General Election, silence should be absolutely preserved with regard to any points of difference on the question of the retention of the Irish members.

'I have dwelt at some length upon these subjects, but not, I think, disproportionately to their importance. Let me say, in addition, that, if and when full powers are conceded to Ireland over her own domestic affairs, the integrity, number, and independence of the Irish party will be a matter of no importance; but until this ideal is reached it is your duty and mine to hold fast every safeguard.

'I need not say that the questions—the vital and important questions—of the retention of the Irish members, on the one hand, and the indefinite delay of full powers to the Irish Legislature on the other, gave me great concern. The absence of any provision for the settlement of the agrarian question, of any policy on the part of the Liberal leaders, filled me with concern and apprehension. On the introduction of the Land Purchase Bill by the Government at the commencement of last session, Mr. Morley communicated with me as to the course to be adopted. Having regard to the avowed absence of any policy on the part of the Liberal leaders and party with regard to the matter of the land, I strongly advised Mr. Morley against any direct challenge of the principle of State-aided land purchase, and, finding that the fears and alarms of the English taxpayer to State aid by the hypothecation of grants for local purposes in Ireland as a counter-guarantee had been assuaged, that a hopeless struggle should not be maintained, and that we should direct our sole efforts on the second reading of the Bill to the assertion of the principle of local control. In this I am bound to say Mr. Morley entirely agreed with me, but he was at the same time much hampered—and expressed his sense of his position—in that direction by the attitude of the extreme section of his party, led by Mr. Labouchere. And in a subsequent interview he impressed me with the necessity of meeting the second reading of the Bill with a direct negative, and asked me to undertake the motion. I agreed to this, but only on the condition that I was not to attack the principle of the measure, but to confine myself to a criticism of its details. I think this was false strategy, but it was strategy adopted out of regard to English

prejudices and Radical peculiarities. I did the best that was possible under the circumstances, and the several days' debate on the second reading contrasts favourably with Mr. Labouchere's recent and abortive attempt to interpose a direct negative to the first reading of a similar Bill yesterday.

'Time went on. The Government allowed their attention to be distracted from the question of land purchase by the Bill for compensating English publicans, and the agrarian difficulty in Ireland was again relegated to the future of another session. Just before the commencement of this session I was again favoured with another interview with Mr. Morley. I impressed upon him the policy of the oblique method of procedure in reference to land purchase, and the necessity and importance of providing for the question of local control and of a limitation in the application of the funds. He agreed with me, and I offered to move, on the first reading of the Bill, an amendment in favour of this local control, advising that, if this were rejected, it might be left to the Radicals on the second reading to oppose the principle of the measure. This appeared to be a proper course, and I left Mr. Morley under the impression that this would fall to my duty.

'But in addition he made me a remarkable proposal, referring to the probable approaching victory of the Liberal party at the polls. He suggested some considerations as to the future of the Irish party. He asked me whether I would be willing to assume the office of Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, or to allow another member of my party to take the position. He also put before me the desirability of filling one of the law offices of the Crown in

Ireland by a legal member of my party. I told him, amazed as I was at the proposal, that I could not agree to forfeit in any way the independence of the party or any of its members; that the Irish people had trusted me in this movement because they believed that the declaration I had made to them at Cork in 1880 was a true one and represented my convictions, and that I would on no account depart from it. I considered that, after the declarations we have repeatedly made, the proposal of Mr. Morley, that we should allow ourselves to be absorbed into English politics, was one based upon an entire misconception of our position with regard to the Irish constituencies and of the pledges which we had given.

'In conclusion, he directed my attention to the Plan of Campaign estates. He said that it would be impossible for the Liberal party when they attained power to do anything for these evicted tenants by direct action; that it would be also impossible for the Irish Parliament, under the powers conferred, to do anything for them, and, flinging up his hands with a gesture of despair, he exclaimed: "Having been to Tipperary, I do not know what to propose in regard to the matter." I told him that this question was a limited one, and that I did not see that he need allow himself to be hampered by its future consideration; that, being limited, funds would be available from America and elsewhere for the support of those tenants as long as might be necessary; that, of course, I understood it was a difficulty, but that it was a limited one, and should not be allowed to interfere with the general interests of the country.

'I allude to this matter only because within the last few days a strong argument in many minds for my expulsion has been that, unless the Liberals come into

power at the next general election, the Plan of Campaign tenants will suffer. As I have shown, the Liberals propose to do nothing for the Plan of Campaign tenants by direct action when they do come into power, but I am entitled to ask that the existence of these tenants, whom I have supported in every way in the past, and whom I shall continue to support in the future, shall not constitute a reason for my expulsion from Irish politics. I have repeatedly pledged myself to stand by these evicted tenants and that they shall not be allowed to suffer, and I believe that the Irish people throughout the world will support me in this policy.

'Sixteen years ago I conceived the idea of an Irish parliamentary party independent of all English parties. Ten years ago I was elected the leader of an independent Irish parliamentary party. During these ten years that party has remained independent, and because of its independence it has forced upon the English people the necessity of granting Home Rule to Ireland. I believe that party will obtain Home Rule only provided it remains independent of any English party.

'I do not believe that any action of the Irish people in supporting me will endanger the Home Rule cause, or postpone the establishment of an Irish Parliament; but even if the danger with which we are threatened by the Liberal party of to-day were to be realised, I believe that the Irish people throughout the world would agree with me that postponement would be preferable to a compromise of our national rights by the acceptance of a measure which would not realise the aspirations of our race.'[1]

[1] Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Morley denied the accuracy of Parnell's account of the interviews with them.

'That,' said Parnell, throwing the manuscript on the table, 'is what I have written.'

Then there was a pause. For a minute no one spoke; every man realised the gravity of the situation, all looked at Mr. Justin McCarthy.

'Parnell,' said Mr. McCarthy, in a voice trembling with anxiety and emotion, 'I disapprove of every word in that manifesto.'

'I am quite ready,' said Parnell, 'to consider any suggestions that any of you may make. What do you object to?'

Mr. McCarthy answered: 'I object to everything in it, Parnell.'

'Point out something,' urged the Chief.

'It's all objectionable, Parnell,' said Mr. McCarthy; 'it is offensive to our English allies.'

'Point out what you consider offensive,' still urged Parnell.

'Well,' said Mr. McCarthy, 'take the words "English wolves."'

'Then,' said Parnell, 'I will not change them. Whatever goes out, these words shall not go out.'

'I do not think, Parnell,' continued Mr. McCarthy, 'that there is much use in discussing the matter. You have made up your mind. You have asked me for my opinion. I have given it to you. I will say no more.'

It was now twelve o'clock, and the meeting broke up.

'I drove Justin home in a cab,' says Mr. William Redmond. 'He was very downcast, and remained in deep reverie all the time. I felt for him, because I believed his heart was with us. He spoke not a word till we got near his house, then suddenly woke up, and

clutching his fist and speaking with an energy that astonished me, said: "And what harm, but I am in the same boat with that d——d cad ——" naming one of the Irish members who had deserted Parnell.'

On Saturday morning, November 29, Parnell's manifesto appeared in all the papers. Its publication may have been a mistake, but it was at least provoked by the publication of Mr. Gladstone's manifesto, a still greater mistake. The Liberal leader had thrown down the gage of battle. The Irish leader took it up. War was now declared, and on Monday, December 1, the first battle was fought in Committee Room 15.

On the previous day Mr. Dillon, Mr. William O'Brien, and Mr. T. P. O'Connor made their solemn recantation, threw Parnell over, and ranged themselves on the side of Mr. Gladstone and the Liberal party. This recantation, which took the form of a public manifesto, was signed by all the American delegates except Mr. Harrington.

One can well conceive how that quaint humorist, Mr. T. D. Sullivan, must have smiled as he saw Mr. Dillon and Mr. William O'Brien, who only a few days before had denounced him for deserting Parnell, put their hands to the document.

Before the decks are cleared for action let us examine the positions of the combatants.

The Liberal Party

It would be mockery to pretend that the Liberal leaders were influenced by moral considerations in their hostility to the Irish leader. The Rev. Hugh Price Hughes and his friends were unquestionably influenced by moral considerations, and, whether one

agrees or disagrees with them, they are certainly entitled to the respect due to all men who, regardless of results, act according to the dictates of conscience. But the Liberal leaders—not unnaturally—thought only of the political consequences of Parnell's moral transgression. 'Can we win the General Election if Parnell remains leader of the Irish party?' That was the question—the sole question—they asked.

Despite the warning note struck by the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, who really must be regarded as the English hero of the struggle, the Liberal leaders believed at first that Parnell would not have to be sacrificed, but gradually they began to waver. Some days before the divorce case came on Mr. Morley and Parnell dined at the Hôtel Métropole at Brighton. Mr. Morley introduced the subject of the divorce case. He said (substantially): 'Suppose this case goes against you, which is possible, what will you do?' Parnell (who, we may assume, did not want to talk about the matter to Mr. Morley or to anyone else) said: 'Depend upon it that the proceedings in the Divorce Court will not oblige me to make any change in my position.' Mr. Morley understood by this answer that Parnell believed he would pass scatheless through the court. Parnell's own statement of his meaning was that he would hold his ground whatever should betide. 'Mr. Morley,' Mr. Campbell[1] subsequently said to me, 'knew right well a week before the case came on that the Chief would not retire, no matter what happened. The Chief told him so.'

On coming back to London Mr. Morley met a Liberal who has given me this account of the interview. 'Mr. Morley told me he had just seen Parnell

[1] Parnell's secretary.

in Brighton—"a most remarkable man, a most extraordinary man," he said. "But what about this divorce case?" I asked. "Parnell will come off all right; he has assured me so," he replied. "But," I said, "suppose he does not come off all right. Suppose he is found guilty of adultery, as we all believe he is, will he retire?" "He will not," said Mr. Morley. "He will remain where he is, and he is quite right." "Well," I said, "if he remains you must be prepared to face the Nonconformists; they won't stand it."'

It is but just to Mr. Morley to say that he was personally animated by the friendliest feeling towards the Irish leader. Even after the divorce proceedings he was not without hope that the storm might yet be weathered. This hope was dispelled at the Sheffield meeting. There he met the Nonconformists, and quickly came to the conclusion that the only course open to the Liberal leader in the interest of the Liberal party was to throw Parnell to the lions.

I asked a distinguished Tory to give me his view of the crisis, and I set out here what he said because, though coming from what might be regarded as a prejudiced source, I believe his statement is a fairly accurate summing up of the situation as far as the Liberal leaders were concerned. He said: 'I cannot conceive why the Irish gave up Parnell. He was everything to them. He was the centre of the whole enterprise, and the idea that things could go on after his overthrow exactly as they went on before seems to be absolutely fatuous. I cannot think even now that Gladstone wished Parnell to go; he must have known too much of the man and too much of the movement. I think Gladstone was forced into the pit. You remember the meeting at Sheffield—what do they call

it? The Federation—yes. That was the beginning. Morley and Harcourt were there. The Nonconformist parsons got at them, frightened them, and then they came up to London, saw Gladstone, and persuaded him to the course he took. The parsons frightened them, and they frightened Gladstone. Cowardice—sheer cowardice—was the cause of Parnell's overthrow.'

What Mr. Gladstone did, he did, first and foremost, in the best interests, or what he believed to be the best interests, of the Liberal party. But I should be doing him scant justice were I to *conceal* the fact that, in his mind, the interests of Liberalism and the interests of Ireland were inseparable.

He had given hostages to fortune on the question of Home Rule. 'He will pull the Liberal party into Home Rule,' a British journalist said to me in the winter of 1885, 'or he will pull them to pieces.' It matters not why Mr. Gladstone became a Home Ruler, it matters not that he was drawn into the movement by the matchless strategy, the commanding genius, of Parnell. Let the truth be spoken. No Irish Nationalist was more determined to establish a Parliament in Ireland than was the Liberal leader on that fatal 24th of November when, in a state of panic, he committed the irreparable blunder of sending his letter to Mr. Morley to the Press, and thus in an instant cutting off all chance of peace. Dominated for the moment by Sir William Harcourt and Mr. Morley—both scared by the Sheffield irreconcilables, of whom I say not a word—he looked upon the expulsion of Parnell from the command of the Irish party as necessary for the success of the Home Rule cause. It was a mad thought, but it was a sincere thought.

The Anti-Parnellites

The Anti-Parnellites were no more influenced by moral considerations than the Liberal leaders; with both the question was one of political expediency pure and simple.

'The divorce case,' says Mr. Harrington, 'produced no effect upon us in America. It was Gladstone's letter that did the thing. It was Gladstone that turned the delegates round.'

'If Parnell remains Gladstone will go, if Gladstone goes we will lose the General Election, and if the General Election is lost there will be an end to Home Rule in our time.'

This was the process of reasoning used by the Anti-Parnellites. I will relate one anecdote to show how much the Parliamentarians were dominated by Mr. Gladstone.

A Parnellite member raised the question that Mr. Gladstone did not say definitely that he would go if Parnell remained—that, in fact, his letter was quite ambiguous on the point. This argument produced an effect on the waverers, whereupon an Anti-Parnellite wrote to Mr. Morley saying that the vagueness of Mr. Gladstone's language left some doubt in the minds of the Irish members as to whether he really meant to retire in the event of Parnell refusing to give way, and suggesting that Mr. Morley should see Mr. Gladstone and get a clear and explicit statement from him. Mr. Morley saw Mr. Gladstone, and then wrote to the Anti-Parnellite, saying, in effect: 'Mr. Gladstone feels that he cannot usefully add anything to what he has already written.' The Irish members, however, were given clearly to understand by the Liberal leaders

that Mr. Gladstone would go if Parnell remained. 'Be quite sure,' Mr. Morley himself said to me, 'that Mr. Gladstone will retire if Parnell does not. Let your friends understand that.' It was this threat that brought the majority of the Irish members to their knees. But let it be said in all truth that in going on their knees they believed they were doing the best for Ireland. To break with Mr. Gladstone, to break with the Liberals, to break with the English democracy, seemed to them sheer madness; therefore they also joined in the cry, 'To the Lions.'

The Parnellites

The Parnellites may be divided into three classes.

1. There were those who supported Parnell purely on personal grounds—men who for twelve years had fought by his side, had suffered and conquered under his command. The recollections of past struggles rushed upon their minds, they thought of the trials and persecutions he had endured, of the defeats and insults he had borne, of the victories he had achieved. They remembered how all England had conspired against him, and how he had triumphed over all England. They felt bound to him by ties of affection, and of comradeship. Were they to abandon him in an hour of trouble at the bidding of another man? 'I will go into the desert again with Parnell' one of these Parnellite stalwarts said to me. 'Was it not he who brought us out of the desert, who brought us within sight of the Promised Land?'

Another of them, Mr. William Redmond, wrote to the Chief saying 'that, come what might, he would remain faithful to the leader of his race.'

Parnell seems to have been moved by the devotion

of his ardent young follower, and there is, I think, a touch of tenderness in his reply:

Parnell to Mr. William Redmond

'My dear Willie,—Thanks very much for your kind letter, which is most consoling and encouraging. It did not require this fresh proof of your friendship to convince me that I have always justly relied upon you as one of the most single-minded and attached of my colleagues.

'Yours very sincerely,
'Charles S. Parnell.'

Outside the circle of Parnell's parliamentary retainers he was beloved by Irishmen and Irishwomen, many of whom, perhaps, had never seen him, but to all of whom his name was a household word. 'When I was leaving my hotel in New York,' says Mr. Harrington, 'on my way home to join Parnell at Kilkenny, the servants—almost all Irish boys and girls—gathered in the hall, or on the stairs, or in the passages, and as I came away all cried out, in voices broken with emotion: "Mr. Harrington, don't desert him," "Don't give him up."'

The hearts of these Irish boys and girls had gone out to Parnell because he had stood in the breach for Ireland. He had sinned. His own people, strong in the possession of those domestic virtues for which their country is famous, had pardoned the sin because the sinner had served and suffered for the nation. Was he now to be thrown to the 'English wolves' because an Englishman forsooth had cast the first stone?

2. There were those who supported Parnell on grounds of political expediency. 'We are told,' they

said, 'that if Parnell remains Mr. Gladstone will go. Then let him go. If the issue be, Parnell without the Liberal alliance, or the Liberal alliance without Parnell, we accept the issue. We stand by our own leader. But Mr. Gladstone does not say he will go. His actual words are: "The continuance of Parnell's leadership would render my retention of the leadership of the Liberal party almost a nullity." This may be Gladstonese for going. We believe it is Gladstonese for staying. Will Mr. Gladstone tell the world that he believes Home Rule to be just and necessary, but that he will abandon it because the Irish leader has broken the seventh commandment? Why, on Mr. Gladstone's own showing, the Land League broke almost all the Ten Commandments, but the fact did not prevent him from carrying the Land Act of 1881, and from practically entering into an offensive and defensive alliance with the League. Mr. Gladstone has divided the Liberal party, has risked his reputation as a statesman, in adopting the Home Rule cause. Is he going to abandon that cause, is he going to forsake a principle founded on justice, and for which he has staked his whole political career—for history will judge him in the end by his Irish policy—because the leader of the Irish party has committed adultery? Is Home Rule to be decided, not on its merits, but according to the domestic life of the Home Rule leader. But if the penalty of fidelity to Parnell mean loss of Mr. Gladstone, so be it. If we have to fight the English Liberals once more, we accept the responsibility. Parnell brought them to their bearings before. He can bring them to their bearings again. Mr. Gladstone is now, we heartily believe, a sincere Home Ruler. But who made him so? He did all in his power to crush the Irish party. He

passed the Coercion Act of 1881. He flung a thousand Irish Nationalists into gaol without trial. He passed the Coercion Act of 1882. He upheld the iron rule of Lord Spencer from 1882 to 1885. In 1885 he asked the electors of Great Britain for a majority to make him independent of the Irish vote. At the end of the election he surrendered. Why? Because Parnell was able to plant his heel on the neck of the Liberal party.'

3. Lastly, there were Parnellites who stood on national grounds pure and simple. 'What is the issue?' they asked. 'The Irish members, encouraged by popular demonstrations in Ireland, have, in defiance of the proceedings in the Divorce Court, unanimously re-elected Parnell. Then Mr. Gladstone steps in and practically calls upon them to reverse their judgment. And they, within twelve hours of the making of that judgment, wheel around and obey him. They acknowledge the right of an Englishman to revise their decision, they submit to English dictation. Is this conduct worthy of any body of men calling themselves self-respecting and self-reliant Irish Nationalists? Had they, in the first instance, refused to re-elect Parnell in consequence of his relations with Mrs. O'Shea, no one could have objected to their action on national grounds. But to have re-elected him in spite of the verdict in the Divorce Court, and then to fling him over in obedience to the decree of an English party leader, is a humiliating submission to foreign control.'

One day I met a Nonconformist friend, and we discussed the situation. I am bound to say that he spoke sympathetically of Parnell, and, I am sure, felt sincerely sorry for what had happened. 'You know,' he said, 'if Gladstone had done this thing he would have had to go.' I replied: 'Possibly. But let

me put this case to you. Suppose Gladstone had done this thing, and had afterwards been re-elected leader of the Liberal party, and that then Parnell intervened and said he must go—would you in such circumstances force him to go?' 'No,' answered my friend energetically, 'we certainly would not.'

The spirit which animated my Nonconformist friend was the spirit which animated the Irish Nationalists of whom I am now speaking. 'We are told,' they said, 'that we cannot succeed without an English alliance. Why, it is notorious that all which Ireland has obtained from England has been obtained not by a policy of alliance, but by a policy of defiance. Was O'Connell in alliance with the Tories when he wrung emancipation from a reluctant Minister? Were the Fenians in alliance with the Liberals when the Church was disestablished and the Land Act of 1870 passed? Was Parnell in alliance with the Liberals when the Land Act of 1881 became law? Was he in alliance with the Tories when the Land Act of 1885 took its place in the statute-book? Was he in alliance with the Liberals when Mr. Gladstone broke the Liberal tradition and flung himself into the ranks of the Home Rulers? Was he in alliance with the Tories when Lord Salisbury broke the Tory tradition and his own pledges and forced the Land Act of 1887 through Parliament? The whole history of the relations between England and Ireland shows that an Irish policy to be successful must be a policy of self-reliance.'

Having examined the positions of the combatants, we shall now witness the combat. Mr. Abraham (Anti-Parnellite) began the operations in Committee

Room 15 by moving 'that Mr. Parnell's tenure of the chairmanship of this party is hereby terminated.'

Parnell at once ruled this resolution out of order. The motion before the party on Wednesday, December 26, was, he pointed out, 'that a full meeting of the party be held on Friday to give Mr. Parnell an opportunity to reconsider his position.' That motion still held the field, and could not be withdrawn unless by the unanimous consent of the meeting. Mr. Abraham did not move an amendment. He moved a substantive resolution, which must wait until the resolution in possession was disposed of. Mr. Abraham's resolution having thus gone by the board, Colonel Nolan (Parnellite) moved 'that the party should meet in Dublin and settle the question there.' The reason of this resolution, on which the combatants now joined issue, was obvious. Parnell wished to get his foes under the pressure of Irish opinion, to draw them away from what he regarded as the fatal influence of the House of Commons. After an animated discussion this resolution was defeated by forty-four to twenty-nine votes.

Beaten on Colonel Nolan's resolution, Parnell now determined to make the discussion centre round Mr. Gladstone's position instead of his own. This was the manœuvre of a master, and he carried it out with Napoleonic address and genius. Mr. Gladstone had disputed the accuracy of the statements made in Parnell's manifesto touching the proposed changes relating to the control of the constabulary and the settlement of the land question. The result was that the attention of the meeting, instead of being concentrated on the question of Parnell's leadership, was suddenly directed to the dispute between Mr. Gladstone and Parnell as to what

the former had said anent the provisions of the next Home Rule Bill. 'Why waste time,' said Parnell in effect, 'in discussing this question now? Go to Mr. Gladstone and get a definite statement from him on the point.' 'When,' said Mr. Redmond, 'we are asked to sell our leader to preserve the English alliance, it seems to me that we are bound to inquire what we are getting for the price we are paying.' 'Don't sell me for nothing,' interrupted Parnell. 'If you get my value you may change me to-morrow.' The reasonableness of this remark struck every man in the room. It might have been a mere tactical move on Parnell's part, but it was thoroughly in keeping with the shrewdness and common-sense which he had ever shown in leading the party.

On December 3 Mr. Clancy moved 'that the whips of the party be instructed to obtain from Mr. Gladstone, Mr. John Morley, and Sir William Harcourt definite information on the vital questions of the constabulary and the land. Parnell had not yet arrived when this resolution was moved. In his absence Mr. Clancy said: 'I have authority for stating that if the assurances are given after the manner suggested in this amendment, Mr. Parnell will retire.' The moment Mr. Clancy had made this statement Parnell entered the room and took his place in the chair. Mr. Healy sprang in an instant to his feet, and, speaking with much emotion, said:

'I wish to make a personal declaration in your regard, Mr. Parnell. I wish to say that if you feel able to meet the party on these points my voice will be the first on the very earliest moment possible consistent with the liberties of my country to call you back to your proper place as leader of the Irish race.'

Mr. Sexton followed. He said: 'I wish also to say that I never for a moment abandoned the hope that, no matter what might happen now, a day would come when you would be leader of the Irish nation in a Legislature where none but Irish opinion would influence your position.' So thought, so felt, the whole Anti-Parnellite party. But the Liberals simply regarded the Anti-Parnellites as a lot of simpletons to allow themselves to be out-manœuvred by this clever device; and as the Anti-Parnellites sank lower and lower in Liberal opinion after this incident of the struggle, the genius of the Chief shone brighter than ever, even in the eyes of his foes.

'What do Healy and Sexton mean,' a distinguished Liberal said to me, 'by accepting Clancy's proposal? Do they think we are fools? Do they imagine that Mr. Gladstone is going at this moment to tell the world what his next Home Rule Bill will be?' What the Irish members considered a fair proposal the Liberals regarded as a *deus ex machinâ*.

The upshot of Mr. Clancy's motion (which was subject to much discussion and to some modification) was that the party unanimously agreed that Mr. Leamy, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Healy, and Mr. John Redmond should seek an interview with Mr. Gladstone to learn his views on '(1) the settlement of the land question; (2) on the control of the constabulary force in the event of the establishment of an Irish Parliament.'[1] 'Gentlemen,' said Parnell, 'it is for you to act in this matter. You are dealing with a man who is an unrivalled sophist. You

[1] It was originally agreed, on Parnell's suggestion, that the delegates should wait on Mr. Gladstone, Sir William Harcourt, and Mr. Morley (and see them all together); but the Liberal leaders having insisted that Mr. Gladstone should alone deal with the subject, it was finally left in his hands.

are dealing with a man to whom it is as impossible to give a direct answer to a plain and simple question as it is for me impossible to give an indirect answer to a plain and simple question. You are dealing with a man who is capable of appealing to the constituencies for a majority which would make him independent of the Irish party. And if I surrender to him, if I give up my position to him—if you throw me to him, I say, gentlemen, that it is your bounden duty to see that you secure value for the sacrifice. How can you secure this value? You can secure this value by making up your minds as to what these provisions in the next Home Rule Bill should be.'

The Liberal leaders were perplexed and irritated at the success of Parnell's manœuvre. It looked as if he might yet snatch the Anti-Parnellites out of the hands of Mr. Gladstone, and even turn the flank of the grand old parliamentary general. The majority of the Irish members had met in Committee Room 15 to dismiss Parnell from the leadership of the Irish parliamentary party, because he had committed adultery with Mrs. O'Shea; and now here they were flinging the divorce proceedings on one side, and uniting with the Parnellites in demanding assurances from Mr. Gladstone on the next Home Rule Bill. Instead of being dismissed, Parnell had actually re-united the whole Irish party for the moment, and had, in the old form, ordered them to advance upon the common enemy. Assuredly in all justice and fairness no reasonable Parnellite could be astonished after this unexpected development that Mr. Morley should have thrown his hands to heaven in despair, and that Sir William Harcourt should have longed once more to cultivate his own fireside. The wishes of the Irish members as expressed in the fore-

going resolution were conveyed to Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Morley, and Sir William Harcourt.

Mr. Gladstone received the delegates (at 1 Carlton Gardens, the residence of Mr., now Lord Rendel) with icy politeness, listened unmoved to Mr. Sexton's appeal, and frigidly read his reply. It came in effect to this: 'The question you have now to decide is the leadership of the Irish party. I am not going to have that question mixed up with Home Rule. One question at a time. I hold the views on Home Rule which I have always held, and when the time comes for introducing a new Home Rule Bill you shall know all about it. Meanwhile rest assured that I shall introduce no Home Rule Bill which has not the unanimous approval of the Irish party.' The Irish delegates tried again and again to get a more satisfactory and definite answer, but they tried in vain, and finally left Carlton Gardens in much distress. Parnell's flank movement had been repelled and the Irish members were once more brought face to face with the question of the leadership, and the question of the leadership alone. It was an interesting game of tactics between the Grand Old Man and the Grand Young Man, but the former won.

At the meeting of the Irish party on December 6 the delegates gave an account of their interview with Mr. Gladstone, whereupon Mr. John O'Connor, Parnellite, moved, amid a scene of wild excitement:

'That having received a report of the proceedings between Mr. Gladstone and the delegates of the party appointed to confer with him, we regret to learn, and we call the attention of our fellow-countrymen to the fact, that Mr. Gladstone refuses to enter into negotiations with the Irish party, or to state his views on the

two vital points submitted for his consideration, except upon the condition that this party shall first remove Mr. Parnell from the chairmanship.' A stormy discussion ensued, and then the proceedings were suddenly brought to a close by Mr. Justin McCarthy rising and saying 'that it was idle to continue the proceedings any longer, and that he and his friends had resolved to retire from the room.' Then Mr. McCarthy, accompanied by forty-four members, withdrew; and Parnell, with twenty-six faithful followers, remained in the chair. 'The split' was complete; Mr. Gladstone had triumphed.

I have thus briefly described the moves in the game. I do not think it is necessary to dwell upon all the scenes which characterised the proceedings in Committee Room 15, or to give even the substance of the many able speeches which were delivered on both sides. But there are a few incidents of the fight which, as they concern Parnell personally, I must recall. He defended his position in what was I think the shortest speech made during the discussions. I shall give an extract.

'Mr. Healy has been trained in this warfare. Who trained him? Who saw his genius first? Who telegraphed to him from America? Who gave him his first opportunity and chance? Who got him his seat in Parliament? That Mr. Healy should be here to-day to destroy me is due to myself.

'Mr. Healy has reminded us that he attended the meeting at the Leinster Hall in Dublin. He reminded me of his services. He has not been slow to remind me of his services to me and to the party. I understand that Mr. Healy attended this meeting in Dublin, and seconded the resolution calling on me not to retire from the leadership. Who asked him to do that? Did I? Who asked Mr. Justin McCarthy to travel

to Dublin, and to say that he could give secret information tending to throw a different complexion on hidden events? Did I? Why was Mr. Sexton away from this meeting, when his counsel might have been of importance to prevent the ravelling up of a false situation? Where was he? Where were you all? Why did you encourage me to come forward and maintain my leadership in the face of the world if you were not going to stand by me? Why did my officers encourage me to take my position on the bridge and at the wheel, if they were going to act as traitors, and to hand me over to the other Commander-in-Chief.'

The Anti-Parnellites said not a word while the weakness of their position was thus exposed with merciless logic.

It was whispered in the lobbies of the House of Commons and in the Liberal clubs, by way of excuse for the conduct of the Anti-Parnellites in re-electing Parnell one day and throwing him over the next, that Parnell had said he would retire provided they re-elected him formally. Parnell dealt with this rumour in characteristic fashion. 'Who set this rumour afloat?' he asked. Someone told him Mr. Tuohy, the able London editor of the 'Freeman's Journal.' He at once summoned Mr. Tuohy to his side in Committee Room 15, and demanded a full inquiry, there and then, into the subject.

The scene which followed must be described.

Mr. Parnell. 'This is Mr. Tuohy who is wanted in this matter. Mr. Lane was under the impression, and stated to the meeting, that he had received from Mr. Tuohy a statement, which he communicated to Mr. Barry, that prior to the meeting on Tuesday I had expressed my intention of resigning in case I was re-

elected to the chairmanship of the party, and that this information so communicated by Mr. Tuohy produced a powerful impression on his mind, and also on Mr. Barry's, in reference to the subsequent proceedings. Now I have asked Mr. Tuohy to state to the meeting [what happened].'

Mr. Lane (intervening) said: 'Mr. Tuohy came to me in the Lobby a few minutes before we came here [November 25], and volunteered the statement to me that you were about to retire. I asked him, was he sure, and he said, "Yes." He then told it to Mr. Sexton, Mr. Barry, and some others. ("Hear, hear.") That statement, sir, was denied in this room at the meeting on Tuesday, and the moment the meeting was over I went and saw my old and valued friend, Mr. Tuohy, in the outer lobby, outside the telegraph office, and asked him on what authority he made the statement to me that Mr. Parnell intended to retire, and his words were—"On the best authority possible—that of Henry Campbell."'

Mr. Parnell. 'Perhaps Mr. Tuohy will now state as briefly as he can what took place between him and Mr. Lane.'

Mr. Tuohy. 'I saw Mr. Campbell at my office on the Saturday before the House met, and I had a conversation with him about the position of Mr. Parnell. We were discussing the matter, and he stated, as his own opinion, and expressly excluded himself from giving it as Mr. Parnell's opinion or intention, that in certain contingencies he thought Mr. Parnell might retire; for instance, if the General Election were forced immediately, and if disunion arose, and Mr. Parnell's continuing as leader would possibly lead to disaster. When I met Mr. Lane in the Lobby I stated to him,

in the first instance, that Mr. Campbell had given this entirely as his own opinion, and that it was not given as Mr. Parnell's intention at all.'

Mr. J. Huntly McCarthy. 'I may say a word on this matter, because I have no knowledge at all of what Mr. Tuohy said with Mr. Lane, but I had a conversation with Mr. Tuohy before the meeting of the party, and I distinctly understood from him that his impression was that Parnell would not resign.' (Applause.)

Mr. Campbell. 'I am sure you will all understand that my position for a considerable time has been a most difficult one. I have had a thousand questions asked me upon this matter during the last fortnight. First of all, I deny that I ever told Mr. Tuohy that I knew Mr. Parnell was going to resign, or that Mr. Parnell told me he was going to resign. But I think I can call in support of my word my friend Mr. Byrne, who asked me on the day of the meeting what Mr. Parnell was going to do. I told him he was going to stand by his position as leader of the party, and I also told my friend Mr. M. J. Kenny the same.'

Mr. M. J. Kenny. 'I think about eleven o'clock on Tuesday morning I met Mr. Campbell, and in the course of the short conversation I had with him he said it was your intention to hold on to the leadership. When I voted on Tuesday for you as leader, I voted for you in the belief that you intended to stick on.'

Mr. Byrne. 'Of what took place between Mr. Lane and Mr. Tuohy I know absolutely nothing. I met Mr. Campbell in the forenoon of Tuesday. I asked him, "How was the Chief? how was his health?" I said, "Is he going to accept the chairmanship?" He said, "Certainly." That is all that passed.'

Mr. Healy and Mr. Sexton had said that Parnell owed his position to the parliamentary party. Parnell's reply was full of the imperial dignity and strength which characterised almost all his utterances. He told Mr. Sexton with perfect courtesy, but with clearness and truth, that it was he who had made the parliamentary party, and not the parliamentary party which had made him. He reminded every man in the room of the jealousies, the rivalries, the dissension, which would have long since rended the party asunder but for his commanding influence. He stood there, he told them, not the leader of a party, but the leader of a nation. He said: 'My responsibility is derived from you, to some extent—to a large extent; but it is also derived from a long train of circumstances and events in which many of you—and I speak to you with the greatest respect—have had no share. My position has been granted to me not because I am a mere leader of a parliamentary party, but because I am the leader of the Irish nation. It has been granted to me on account of the services which I have rendered in building up this party, in conciliating prejudices, in soothing differences of opinion, and in keeping together the discordant elements of our race within the bounds of moderation.'

One day there was a disorderly scene. Mr. Healy and Mr. Barry were disposed to resist the ruling of the chair; Parnell asserted his authority with characteristic vigour.

Mr. Healy. 'I rise to a point of order. I ask if the chairman would be good enough to inform me what is the question before the meeting?'

Mr. E. Harrington. 'No, no, you were but——'

Mr. Parnell. 'A discussion has been opened by

Mr. Barry on the question of communication with the delegates in America, and that discussion will have to proceed to its end.'

Mr. Healy. 'Another piece of pure obstruction.'

Parnell. 'I think that is a most insolent and impertinent observation—a most insolent and impertinent observation.'

Mr. Barry. 'I rise——'

Parnell. 'Sit down, Mr. Barry, please.'

Mr. Barry. 'Allow me——'

Parnell. 'I will not allow you, sir. Mr. Leamy is in possession, let him go on'; and Mr. Leamy went on.

Mr. Healy said in the course of these debates in Committee Room 15 that Mr. Parnell was 'judge,' 'counsel,' and 'defendant.' In a sense this statement is true. Parnell was himself perhaps the last man who would descend to the cant of saying that he had come to Committee Room 15 to hold the balance evenly between the parties—that he had come to sit judicially, and, having heard the discussion, to put the resolution dethroning him to the meeting. He came to Committee Room 15, not to adjudicate but to fight, and to fight with his back to the wall. There can be no doubt whatever about that fact. 'If you admit that,' an Anti-Parnellite said, 'if you say that, distrusting and despising the whole lot of us, he came to fight and to beat us, then of course there cannot be a question but that he fought according to the rules of war, and with a skill, an energy, and a dash which extorted admiration from every man in the room.'

'I thought I knew Parnell well,' says Mr. Healy, 'but it was only in Committee Room 15 that I realised his bigness. No one man could have admired his

genius, his resources, his generalship, in that fight more than I did.'

One night before the debates in Committee Room 15 had concluded, Parnell sat in the Smoking-room of the House of Commons having a cup of tea with one of the Irish members. For some moments he remained quite silent; and then suddenly, as if thinking aloud, said: 'Yes, I always felt it would end in this way.' His companion said nothing. His first thought was that Parnell might be going to talk about the Divorce Court.

'Yes,' repeated the Chief, 'I always said it would end badly.'

'What,' at length said his companion, 'what did you say would end badly?'

'The Plan of Campaign,' answered Parnell.

CHAPTER XXIV

KILKENNY

The scene of the struggle now changes from London to Ireland. An election was pending in North Kilkenny. Sir John Pope Hennessy had been selected as the Nationalist candidate before the split. The question now arose, Upon which side—Parnellite or Anti-Parnellite—would he stand?

While the matter was still in suspense Parnell sent for me. We met in the Smoking-room of the House of Commons on, I think, Monday evening, December 8. He looked tired, ill, distressed. He seemed to me to be absolutely without energy. He leant back on the seat and appeared to be quite absent-minded. Speaking in a very low voice and as if suffering physical pain, he said, after a while: 'I want to talk to you about Kilkenny. We have wired to Hennessy to ask if he will stand for us, and we have received no reply yet. Suppose the reply is unfavourable, will you stand?' I replied it would not suit me for many reasons to go into Parliament; and that, for one reason, I could not afford to pay the expenses of a contested election. 'You want a man with money,' I said. He answered: 'I know that, and I will get a man with money if I can; but if I can't, will you stand?' It was finally agreed that I should stand if called upon,

and that he would pay my expenses. In Parliament itself, of course, I should be self-supporting.

On Tuesday night, December 9, he started for Ireland, accompanied by many of his colleagues. A reporter from the 'Freeman's Journal' asked him before his departure, 'What message, Mr. Parnell, shall I send from you to the Irish people?' 'Tell them,' he replied, 'that I will fight to the end.'

On Wednesday morning, December 10, he arrived in Dublin and went straight to the house of Dr. Kenny. There he received a hearty welcome, not only from the multitude collected outside but from the many friends gathered within. An eyewitness has given me an account of the scene in Dr. Kenny's breakfast-room on that eventful morning. 'The room was full of men, all talking together, interrupting each other, making suggestions and counter-suggestions, proposing plans and counter-plans, and everyone too full of his own views to listen to the views of anyone else. Parnell sat silently near the fire, looking thoughtfully into it and apparently heeding nothing that was going on. Mrs. Kenny entered the room, made her way through the crowd to Parnell, and said: 'Mr. Parnell, do you not want something to eat?'

'That is just what I do want,' he said, with a smile.

'Why,' said Mrs. Kenny, going among the agitators, 'don't you see that the man is worn out and wants something to eat, while you all keep talking and debating, and making a noise.'

Soon there was complete silence, and Parnell sat to the table, saying, 'I am as hungry as a hawk.'

Breakfast over, the Chief did not allow the grass to grow under his feet. 'United Ireland,' which had

been founded by him, had under the direction of Mr. Matthias Bodkin, the acting editor in Mr. William O'Brien's absence, gone over to the enemy. Parnell's first order was, 'Seize "United Ireland," expel Bodkin, and put Mr. Leamy in charge of the paper.' This order was carried out on the morning of December 18, under the superintendence of Parnell himself, with characteristic vigour and despatch. Going straight to the office of the paper he removed Mr. Bodkin and his staff, placing Mr. Leamy in the editorial chair. One of Parnell's Fenian supporters has given me a brief and pithy account of what happened. 'I went up to Matty Bodkin. "Matty," says I, "will you walk out, or would you like to be thrown out?" and Matty walked out.'

That night Parnell addressed a great meeting at the Rotunda. Miss Katharine Tynan (Mrs. Hinkson) was present, and has given a graphic account of what she saw: 'It was nearly 8.30 when we heard the bands coming; then the windows were lit up by the lurid glare of thousands of torches in the street outside. There was a distant roaring like the sea. The great gathering within waited silently with expectation. Then the cheering began, and we craned our necks and looked on eagerly, and there was the tall, slender, distinguished figure of the Irish leader making its way across the platform. I don't think any words could do justice to his reception. The house rose at him; everywhere around there was a sea of passionate faces, loving, admiring, almost worshipping that silent, pale man. The cheering broke out again and again; there was no quelling it. Mr. Parnell bowed from side to side, sweeping the assemblage with his eagle glance. The people were fairly mad with excitement. I don't think anyone outside Ireland can understand what a

charm Mr. Parnell has for the Irish heart; that wonderful personality of his, his proud bearing, his handsome, strong face, the distinction of look which marks him more than anyone I have ever seen. All these are irresistible to the artistic Irish.

'I said to Dr. Kenny, who was standing by me, "He is the only quiet man here." "Outwardly," said the keen medical man, emphatically. Looking again, one saw the dilated nostrils, the flashing eye, the passionate face: the leader was simply drinking in thirstily this immense love, which must have been more heartening than one can say after that bitter time in the English capital. Mr. Parnell looked frail enough in body—perhaps the black frock-coat, buttoned so tightly across his chest, gave him that look of attenuation; but he also looked full of indomitable spirit and fire.

'For a time silence was not obtainable. Then Father Walter Hurley climbed on the table and stood with his arms extended. It was curious how the attitude silenced a crowd which could hear no words.

'When Mr. Parnell came to speak, the passion within him found vent. It was a wonderful speech; not one word of it for oratorical effect, but every word charged with a pregnant message to the people who were listening to him, and the millions who should read him. It was a long speech, lasting nearly an hour; but listened to with intense interest, punctuated by fierce cries against men whom this crisis has made odious, now and then marked in a pause by a deep-drawn moan of delight. It was a great speech—simple, direct, suave—with no device and no artificiality. Mr. Parnell said long ago, in a furious moment in the House of Commons, that he cared nothing for the opinion of the

English people. One remembered it now, noting his passionate assurances to his own people, who loved him too well to ask him questions.'

One sentence from Parnell's speech will suffice. It was the simple truth, and went to the heart of every man and every woman in the assembly.

'I don't pretend that I had not moments of trial and of temptation, but I do claim that never in thought, word, or deed have I been false to the trust that Irishmen have confided in me.'

There were many in the Rotunda who did not look upon Parnell as a blameless man, or even a blameless politician; but all felt that in every emergency, through good report and ill report, he had been faithful to Ireland and the foe of English rule in the island. This was the bond of union between him and the men who carried the 'thousands of torches' that lighted up his path that night—the men on whom he now relied to face his enemies.

While the meeting in the Rotunda was going on the Anti-Parnellites made a raid on 'United Ireland,' and recaptured it.

Next morning Parnell rose betimes—he had to start for Cork by an early train. But 'United Ireland' was not to be left in the hands of the seceders. Dr. Kenny's carriage was quickly ordered to the door. 'We must re-capture "United Ireland" on our way to the train,' said the Chief, as he finished his breakfast.

A description of the dramatic scene which followed has been given to me by a gentleman wholly unconnected with politics, who happened, by the merest chance, to be in the neighbourhood when the final battle over 'United Ireland' was fought.

'I was walking down the north side of O'Connell Street, when there was a rush from all quarters in the direction of Lower Abbey Street. I followed the crowd, which stopped opposite the office of "United Ireland." There I witnessed a scene of wild excitement. Sticks and revolvers were being circulated freely by men who passed in and out of the dense mass, but as yet no blows had been exchanged.

'The enemy was, in fact, safe behind barred doors and windows, out of harm's way for the present, in the office of "United Ireland." Suddenly round the street corner dashed a pony carriage containing two gentlemen, as well as I can remember unattended; one, I was told, was Dr. Kenny, the other I knew to be Charles Stewart Parnell. I had seen him before in Ennis addressing a multitude of Clare men under the shadow of O'Connell's monument. I had been struck on that day by his power of electrifying a great multitude. I was to be even more moved and startled by him on this day. The carriage dashed on, the people making way for it, and it was as well, for no attempt was made to slacken speed. Both men seemed heedless of the crowd, thinking sternly of the seizure of the offices which they had come to make. A tremendous sensation was produced by the appearance of Parnell. They had been, doubtless, on the point of storming the citadel of the mutineers, and here was their captain come to fight in their front. Cheer after cheer filled the air, mingled with cries of hatred, defiance, and exultation. The carriage was checked so abruptly that the horse fell flat upon the road. Parnell sprang out, rushed up the steps, and knocked peremptorily at the office door. There was a pause, during which every eye regarded him and him alone. Suddenly he turned,

his face pale with passion, his dark eyes flaming; he realised that obedience was not to be expected from those within, realised also the pain of being taunted and jeered at by his own countrymen, for there were indications of this from those within. He turned and spoke to some of his followers, then stood to wait. We knew by instinct that he was not going to turn away from that door, at which he had demanded admittance; he intended to storm the stronghold of the mutineers.

'I forgot everything save that there was going to be a historic fight, and that I wanted to have a good view of it. I dashed into a house opposite, and, without waiting for formal leave, ran upstairs. The windows of the first floor were crowded. I ran higher up, and soon gained a splendid point of vantage. I was in full sight of the beleaguered offices, and had a bird's-eye view of the crowd in the street—a crowd of grim, determined, passionate men, many of them armed, and all ready and eager for a fray. Parnell's envoys were back by this time, bringing from some place near a crowbar and pickaxe. There was a brief discussion. Then Parnell suddenly realised that the fort might be carried from the area door. In a moment he was on the point of vaulting the railings. The hands of considerate friends restrained him by force. I heard his voice ring out clearly, impatiently, imperatively: "Go yourselves, if you will not let me." At the word several of those around him dropped into the area. Now Parnell snatched the crowbar, and, swinging his arms with might and main, thundered at the door. The door yielded, and, followed by those nearest to him, he disappeared into the hall. Instantly uprose a terrible noise. The other storming party, it seems, had entered

from the area, and, rushing upstairs, had crashed into Parnell's bodyguard. What happened within the house I do not know, for spectators outside could only hold their breath and listen and guess. Feet clattered on the boarded stairs, voices hoarse with rage shrieked and shouted. A veritable pandemonium was let loose. At last there was a lull within, broken by the cheers of the waiting crowd without. One of the windows on the second storey was removed, and Parnell suddenly appeared in the aperture. He had conquered. The enthusiasm which greeted him cannot be described. His face was ghastly pale, save only that on either cheek a hectic crimson spot was glowing. His hat was off now, his hair dishevelled, the dust of the conflict begrimed his well-brushed coat. The people were spellbound, almost terrified, as they gazed on him. For myself, I felt a thrill of dread, as if I looked at a tiger in the frenzy of its rage. Then he spoke, and the tone of his voice was even more terrible than his look. He was brief, rapid, decisive, and the closing words of his speech still ring in my ear: "I rely on Dublin. Dublin is true. What Dublin says to-day Ireland will say to-morrow."

'He had simply recaptured "United Ireland" on his way going south to Cork. The work done, he immediately entered the carriage and drove to King's Bridge terminus. After what I had witnessed I could not go tamely about my business. Hailing a car, I dashed down the quays. Many other cars went in the same direction, and the faithful crowd followed afoot. I was among the first to reach the terminus. I pushed towards the platform, but was stopped by the ticket collector. I was determined, however, not to be baulked, and I was engaged in a hot altercation with him, when

I felt myself being crushed and wedged forward. With or without leave, I was being swept onto the platform, and, turning to see who was pushing or being pushed against me in the gangway, I found to my amazement that the foremost in the throng was Parnell himself. My look of angry remonstrance was doubtless soon turned, as I met his inscrutable gaze, into one of curious awe. The crowd at the station was now immense, and the spirit of "I don't care what I do" which led me up to the room in Lower Abbey Street seemed to inspire everybody. People rushed about madly on the platform, seeking for every point of vantage to look at the Chief. Ladies got out of the first-class carriages of the train, which was waiting to start, and mingled in the throng. Parnell had entered a saloon carriage; the crowd cheered again and again, calling his name. He stood at the carriage window, looking pale, weary, wistful, and bowed graciously to the enthusiastic crowd. Many of those present endorsed the words of a young lady who exclaimed, addressing an elderly aristocrat wrapped in furs: "Oh, father, hasn't he a lovely face!" The face disappeared from the window. The cheers again rose up, and then died away as the train passed from our sight.'

Parnell arrived in Cork that evening, and received a hearty welcome from his constituents, whom he addressed in a stirring speech, the keynote of which was 'No English dictation.' Throughout the day he was full of fight, and bore himself bravely; but when night came he showed manifest signs of fatigue, illness, worry, and distress.

Says his old friend Mr. Horgan:

'I remember his visit to Cork after the fight in Committee Room 15. I saw him in the Victoria Hotel

that night. He looked like a hunted hind; his hair was dishevelled, his beard unkempt, his eyes were wild and restless. The room was full of people. He sat down to a chop; but he only made a pretence of eating. I did not like to speak to him, but his eye rested on me and he called me to him. I sat near him, and we talked generally. After a time the waiter came to him and said, "Would you wish to see your room, Mr. Parnell?" Parnell said, "Oh no. I am not going to sleep here. I am going to sleep with my friend, Mr. Horgan." I sent a messenger to my wife to say we should arrive in about an hour, and to have things ready. When we arrived she received him very kindly, as if nothing had happened. She had some supper prepared for him, but he said he would not take anything except a raw egg. We got him the raw egg, and the tumbler. He broke the egg into the tumbler and swallowed it at a gulp. He then said, "That's a very good egg. May I have another?" and he swallowed that just the same. He then said, "I will now go to bed." In the morning he sent the maid for me about seven o'clock. I found him sitting in the bed drinking a tumbler of hot water. He said: 'I want to see Sir John Arnot. I want to induce him to buy the Ponsonby Estate, and to restore the evicted tenants. I must see him secretly. Can you manage it?" I said: "No, that it was impossible; that Arnot was an old man and could not come to him, and that if he went to Arnot the whole town would know it." After some further talk he felt the project was hopeless, and abandoned it.'

Before Parnell's departure from London he had sent me a telegram, saying: 'Come to Dublin as soon as possible.' Sir John Pope Hennessy had

just declared that he would support the Catholic hierarchy, who had on December 3 condemned Parnell's leadership on moral grounds. Parnell was thus left on the eve of the election without a candidate. On December 11 I started for Dublin, writing to Parnell saying that I would go through with the business, but still expressing the hope that he would get a better man. In the meantime, Mr. Vincent Scully, a gentleman of wealth and position, a Tipperary landlord with popular sympathies and a generous heart, had chivalrously jumped into the breach. 'I stood for Kilkenny,' he afterwards said to me, 'as a protest against the publication of Gladstone's letter to Morley. Explain it as they may, that was English dictation.'

It was characteristic of Parnell that having accepted Scully's candidature on the morning of the 11th, he did not take the trouble to communicate the fact to me. 'Shall I wire to O'Brien not to come?' Dr. Kenny asked him at breakfast. 'No,' said he, 'he has started by this time.'

Dr. Kenny explained that I might be turned back *en route*. 'No,' said the Chief, 'better let him come on. You can meet him when he arrives and explain.' 'Well,' I said, on hearing the Doctor's explanation, 'he has of course done what is right, but why did you not wire and stop me? And what does Parnell expect me to do now?' 'He expects you,' said the Doctor, 'to come to Kilkenny to help Scully.' And we both laughed.

During the Kilkenny election someone said, 'It is only Parnell who can do these things. He has been in treaty with three candidates, O'Brien, Scully, and John Kelly. He finally nominates Scully, and gets the

other two to come to Kilkenny to help Scully, and all three work together like niggers.'

I arrived at Kilkenny on Saturday evening, the 13th December. The Parnellites had practically taken possession of the Victoria Hotel. One room was given up to the Press. Almost all the rest of the hotel was held by the supporters of the Chief. I found the large coffee-room upstairs full of men. Some were at the table, dining, others were seated on the lounge, more stood in clusters around. I was struck by the silence which prevailed. All spoke in whispers; waiters stole softly in and out. Every individual seemed anxious to make no noise. It was like the stillness of a sick-room. In a sense it was a sick-room. Stretched on a number of chairs before the fire lay Parnell, sleeping. To me he looked like a dying man. 'He's been very ill,' said Mr. J. J. O'Kelly, the one personal friend whom Parnell had in the whole party—the one man to whom he freely opened his mind, when, indeed, he opened it at all. 'He's been very ill, and we want to get him to bed. A good night's rest would set him up.' I dined in the Press room. About half an hour afterwards someone came to say that Parnell wished to see me. I found him sitting in an arm-chair. He looked pale and exhausted, but the old fire still burned in his eyes. 'I am glad you have come,' he said. I asked: 'How does the fight go on?' He replied: 'They have got at the miners in Castlecomer; Davitt did that; they were first in the field.' 'Upon the whole, are you hopeful?' I again asked. 'Yes,' he answered, 'but remember this is only the first battle of the campaign. If the priests were your side,' I said, 'you would sweep the country from end to end.' 'Yes,' he said, 'it is the priests.' Then, looking into the fire, he added:

'I do not blame the people for following the priests. It is natural; but the priests are not good political guides.' 'Have you all the Fenians at your back?' I asked. 'Yes, in Ireland,' he answered. 'America?' I said. 'I shall have them in America, too,' he replied. Soon after Mr. O'Kelly came up, and said: 'I think you had better go to bed. You have a big day's work before you to-morrow. You had better have a good night's rest.' Parnell said: 'Yes, I will go to my room.'

Mr. O'Kelly was right. A good night's rest did set Parnell up. Next morning he was a new man. I was alone in the breakfast-room when he came down. 'How are you, this morning?' I asked. 'Very well,' he answered, with a jaunty shake of the head, and looking very bright and handsome. 'I want you,' he went on, 'to take charge of my letters. Open them all; let me have those you think important, destroy the rest. Keep all the telegrams unopened until I return each evening.' A couple of hours later he mounted the dray at the door, to drive to some outlying district; and one could not help being impressed by his appearance when, as the crowd cheered enthusiastically, he raised his hat and bowed with that kingly air which was his chief characteristic.

On Monday night he did not return to Kilkenny. Meanwhile a committee of six had been formed to manage the election. The committee was a failure. There was a good deal of talk, a good deal of discussion, a good deal of indecision, and no practical work. About ten o'clock on Monday night, as the committee sat in solemn conclave, everybody proposing something but nobody agreeing to anything, the door opened and a messenger from Parnell entered. 'I have come from

the Chief,' he said. Up to that moment there had been a babel of talk in the room. Now there was dead silence. 'What does he say?' asked the chairman of the committee. 'He says that this committee must be broken up,' was the quick answer; and everyone burst into laughter. The Chief was eight or ten miles away from the scene of the committee's labours, but had he been on the spot, had he witnessed the operations of the committee, he could not have arrived at a sounder decision. Everyone in the room felt that. 'Well, and what's to be done?' asked the chairman. 'He says that one man is to remain here and take charge of the whole work. He can have a local assistant if he likes. The rest of you must be distributed over the division. One person must direct operations from the centre.' 'Well, who is that person to be?' said the late chairman of the defunct committee. 'L.,' was the answer. 'Why L.?' said the ex-chairman. 'Because the Chief thinks he can keep us in touch with our friends in London and in Dublin.' And so it was settled. 'If I am to be in charge,' said L., 'I must have the assistance of ——,' naming a Fenian. 'Well,' said the Parliamentarians, 'you had better be careful. You may raise a spirit which you cannot lay.' 'That's nonsense,' said L. 'The spirit is raised already, and raised by Parnell. This town of Kilkenny is held by Fenians, and Parnell could not carry on the fight for a week without the Fenians. At this moment the Fenian in question burst into the room. 'Where is Mr. Parnell?' he asked. He was told that Parnell would not return to Kilkenny that night. 'Well,' he said, 'Mr. Parnell made an appointment with me here at ten o'clock, and if Mr. Parnell does not keep his appointments with me I shall leave

the town at once.' This announcement had a startling effect, and the Parliamentarians began to explain. 'I want no explanations,' said the Fenian. 'We are here to help Mr. Parnell; we are not paid by him. We are not his people. He must keep his appointments.' And he flew out of the room as suddenly as he had entered it. 'Well, gentlemen,' said L., as soon as he had gone, 'what do you say now? Are you going to ignore ——.' 'I say,' answered the ex-chairman, 'that we had better obey Parnell. He has named a man to work the whole business. Let him have all responsibility.'

That night L. and —— took counsel together, and next day the members of the late committee were distributed over the division. On Monday night Parnell returned, and remained for some time in consultation with ——, whose forces, indeed, formed the van of the Parnellite army.

The election lasted for ten days. During that time Parnell showed wonderful vigour for a man in failing health, going from end to end of the division, speaking, working, directing, returning each night much fatigued, retiring early to rest, and coming down next morning full of fight and energy. 'While I have my life,' he said at Kilkenny two days before the polling, 'I will go from one constituency to another, from one city to another, from one town and village and parish to another, to put what I know is the truth before the people.' At Castlecomer, where the rival parties met, Davitt sent a message proposing that both of them should speak side by side from the same drag and answer each other's speeches. 'Tell him,' said Parnell, with a grim smile at the grotesqueness of the proposal, 'that I have come to fight, not to treat.'

Davitt attacked him for 'appealing in his desperation to the hillside men and the Fenian sentiment of the country,' adding: 'It would be a piece of criminal folly in Mr. Parnell to lead the young men of the country to face the might of England in the field.' Parnell replied in a stirring speech, addressed to the 'physical force men,' from the window of the Victoria Hotel, Kilkenny, defining his position towards them with characteristic precision and frankness:

'I have, in answer to this, to announce, in no undecided tones and with a clear voice, that I have appealed to no section of my country. My appeal has been made to the whole Irish race, and if the young men are distinguished amongst my supporters it is because they know what I have promised them I will do. I have not promised to lead them against the armed might of England. I have told them that, so long as I can maintain an independent Irish party in the English Parliament, there is hope of winning our legislative independence by constitutional means. I have said that, and I repeat it to-night. Hear it again. So long as we can keep our Irish party pure and undefiled from any contact or fusion with any English parliamentary party, independent and upright, there is good reason for us to hope that we shall win legislative independence for Ireland by constitutional means. So long as such a party exists I will remain at its head. But when it appears to me that it is impossible to obtain Home Rule for Ireland by constitutional means, I have said this—and this is the extent and limit of my pledge, that is the pledge which has been accepted by the young men of Ireland, whom Michael Davitt in his derision calls the hillside men—I have said that when it is clear to me that I can no longer hope to obtain

our constitution by constitutional and parliamentary means, I will in a moment so declare it to the people of Ireland, and, returning at the head of my party, I will take counsel with you as to the next step. That, fellow-countrymen, is the nature and extent of my declaration, which I made in Cork in '80—which was accepted then by my constituents when they placed me at the head of the poll in succession to my late friend Joseph Ronayne. That pledge was accepted by the whole of Ireland—by the hillside men and every other man in the country—as a just position for me to take up and to fight this constitutional battle from. I have not in any sense, not in one iota, departed from it. I stand on the same ground to-night as I did then, and if the young men of Ireland have trusted me it is because they know that I am not a mere Parliamentarian; that I can be trusted to keep my word to them to go as far as a brave and honest heart can go on this parliamentary alliance, and test it to the uttermost, and that when and if I find it useless and unavailing to persevere further, they can depend upon me to tell them so. . . . I have stood on the same platform, I have remained true to the same declarations and the same pledges, and when anybody has the audacity to taunt me with being a hillside man I say to him I am what I am because I am known to be an honest an unchanging Irishman.'

It would be idle to deny that the struggle at Kilkenny was a fight between Parnellism *plus* Fenianism and the Church. Mr. Gladstone and the Liberals influenced, indeed dominated, the majority of the Irish members. But the priests, and the priests alone, influenced and dominated the electors of North Kilkenny. I will give an illustration of what I mean. In one

district—Kilmanagh—the parish priest, Father Murphy, supported Parnell. In that district Parnell had a majority. In every other district the parish priest was against him, and in every other district he was beaten. 'Do any of the Parliamentarians,' I asked a Fenian, 'count in this fight?' 'Not one,' he answered; 'Healy is fighting like a devil, but only for the priests and the police he could not remain in the constituency for an hour. The only power in Ireland that can stand up to Parnell is the Church, and the only power that can stand up to the Church is Fenianism.' Parnell felt the pressure of the priests at every turn. But only on one occasion did I see him show irritation or anger. It was stated that the priests intended to act as personation agents on the day of the election. 'They shall not act as personation agents,' he said with unusual excitement; 'it is illegal.' Someone pointed out that it was not illegal, however undesirable. 'They shall not act,' he repeated with energy. 'A protest must be prepared at once, and sent to the sheriff.' Two days later Mr. Scully handed me the protest, saying: 'Parnell insists upon this being sent to the sheriff, but I think it is a mistake every way. The priests have a legal right to act. I wish you would see Parnell.' I went into the coffee-room, where Parnell was sitting on the lounge, apart from everyone, and looking—a very unusual thing—decidedly sulky. I sat near him and said, holding up the protest: 'I want to talk to you about this. Will you give me five minutes?' 'I will give you an hour if you like,' he said, with a grim expression; 'you can talk away.' I said I thought the protest was a mistake, that it would have no legal effect, and that I was doubtful whether it would have a useful political effect. He said it was a mischievous practice and

should be stopped. After some more conversation I said: 'You are drawing the sword on the whole order instead of objecting to the action of any individual priest. O'Connell could afford to do this; you can't. If the priests have to be fought, they must be fought by Catholics, not by Protestants.' 'Ah! now,' he said, 'you have said something which is quite true. A Protestant leader must not do this. But the system must be stopped. You Catholics must stop it. The priests themselves must be got to see that it is wrong.' 'Shall I tear this?' I said, holding up the protest. 'Yes,' he answered, with his old pleasant and winning smile.

The polling took place on December 22. That night Parnell, fresh from visiting almost all the polling stations, came into a room in the hotel where I sat alone. 'I wish to be alone,' he said. 'See that no one comes in.' He took off his coat, hat, muffler, sat near the fire, removed his boots and socks (which he carefully examined), warmed his feet, and remained in a deep reverie for some twenty minutes. Then, having put on another pair of boots, he stood with his back to the mantel-shelf and said, with a droll smile: 'They are making calculations in the other room of our majority. I think they will be surprised when the poll is declared to-morrow. We have been well beaten. But it is only the first battle of the campaign. I will contest every election in the country. I will fight while I live'—a promise which he kept to the bitter end. Next morning the votes were counted. There was no man in the room at the Court House during that process who seemed to be in better humour or who looked less anxious, though he watched everything very carefully and was always on the alert, than Parnell.

Davitt was walking up and down at one end of the room with nervous energy. I came and talked to him. 'A nice scene this,' he said. 'It reminds me of what you sometimes see in the Holy Land—Christians quarrelling with each other over Our Lord's tomb, while Mohammedan soldiers look on and keep the peace. Here are we Irish Nationalists ready to fly at each other's throats while these English police stand by to keep order. It is perfectly disgraceful. What will he (Parnell) do now? He is beaten by at least 1,000 votes.' 'Well, Davitt,' I replied, 'you ought to know him better than I. He will fight on. One defeat, twenty defeats, won't affect him. He will not take his dismissal from an Englishman.' Davitt shook his head sorrowfully. On rejoining Parnell (who sat at the top of the table near the sheriff, keeping a keen eye on Mr. Healy—who was opposite—all the time), he said: 'I see you have been talking to the future leader of the Irish race at home and abroad. He looks very uncomfortable. What is the matter with him?' 'Well,' I replied, 'Davitt at all events is not opposing you at the bidding of Mr. Gladstone. He took his line—rightly or wrongly—before Mr. Gladstone spoke. That is the difference between him and the rest of your opponents.' 'Yes,' he said, looking thoughtfully at Davitt, who still kept walking up and down. 'That is true, and he has suffered too.'

About one o'clock the poll was declared:

Pope Hennessy	2,527
Vincent Scully	1,362

That night Parnell returned to Dublin, and addressed a large meeting of his followers gathered outside the

National Club in Rutland Square. 'I am blamed,' he said, 'for refusing to leave Ireland—I will not say to the mercy of Mr. Gladstone, but I will say to the rag-tag and bob-tail of the English Liberal party, and of the English Press. These men did not give me my commission, and I will not receive my dismissal from them.'

CHAPTER XXV

THE BOULOGNE NEGOTIATIONS

THE scene now changes once more. Towards the end of December Mr. William O'Brien arrived at Boulogne from America. He could not return to Ireland as a warrant was still out for his arrest.[1] He was anxious to see Parnell with a view of discussing the possibilities of peace. Parnell, it must be said, had now little faith in ending the struggle by diplomatic action. He believed the fight would have to be fought out to the end. Yet, yielding to the wishes of his colleagues, he consented to meet Mr. O'Brien at Boulogne. In the closing days of the old year he crossed the Channel accompanied by Mr. John Redmond, Mr. William Redmond, Mr. J. J. Clancy, Mr. Henry Campbell, and Mr. Vincent Scully. Mr. John Redmond has given me an account of the meeting between the Chief and his old lieutenant.

'When we arrived we went to an hotel. O'Brien rushed up gushingly to meet Parnell, who was extremely reserved and cold. He saluted O'Brien just as

[1] Warrants were out for the arrest both of Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Dillon. They had, as I have already mentioned, escaped from Ireland in August 1890, by the help of a Fenian who carried them across the Channel to France in a private yacht. Afterwards, when Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Dillon deserted Parnell, this Fenian—a bluff and witty Revolutionist—said: 'Ah, when I had them in the middle of the Channel, why didn't I drop them there?'

if he had seen him yesterday, and as if there were nothing special going forward. O'Brien plunged into business at once. "Oh no, William," said Parnell, "I must get something to eat first." Then he ordered luncheon and we all sat down and ate. When luncheon was over Parnell said: "Now, William, we will talk." We then adjourned to another room. Parnell remained silent, reserved, cold. He did not in any way encourage O'Brien to talk. He looked around at the rest of us, as much as to say, "Well, what the devil do you all want?" The rest of us soon withdrew, leaving Parnell and O'Brien together. After some time O'Brien rejoined us. He looked utterly flabbergasted, said it was all over, and that Parnell had no intention of doing anything. I asked him if he had made any proposals to Parnell, or if he had any proposals to make. He said that he had proposals, but did not submit them to Parnell, as Parnell seemed so unwilling to talk. He then stated the proposals to me, which were substantially, so far as I can now remember, these:

'1. The retraction of the bishops' manifesto.

'2. Some acknowledgment from Mr. Gladstone that the publication of his letter was precipitate and inadvisable.

'3. A meeting of the whole party in Dublin with Parnell in the chair; acknowledgment of the informality of Mr. McCarthy's election as chairman.

'4. Voluntary resignation of Parnell, who should, however, remain President of the National League.

'5. Election of a temporary chairman.

'6. Appointment of Dillon as chairman.

'I went immediately to Parnell, and told him of these proposals. "Ah, now we have something specific to go upon. Let O'Brien come back."

'O'Brien came back, and these points were discussed. Parnell said at once that he would not accept the chairmanship of Dillon, but he would with pleasure accept the chairmanship of O'Brien. O'Brien and I then went out and wired to Dillon, saying that Parnell had proposed that O'Brien should be leader of the party. Dillon wired back, warning O'Brien to beware of Parnell, and not to trust him. Such at least is my recollection of the substance of the telegram. Next day Parnell returned to London, and I went to Paris with O'Brien, where I remained for some eight or ten days. Nothing so far was settled.'

Soon after his return to London Parnell wrote (January 1, 1891) to Mr. O'Brien, saying that he feared the latter's proposals were impracticable. He, however, had a counter-proposal to make. This proposal was nothing more nor less than a revival of the Clancy compromise. Having set out the details of the compromise, Parnell went on:

Parnell to Mr. O'Brien

'My proposal now is: (1) That you should suggest to Mr. McCarthy to obtain an interview with Mr. Gladstone at Hawarden, and ask from him a memorandum expressing the intentions of himself and his colleagues upon these views and details, as explained by the delegates in their interview with Mr. Gladstone on December 5. (2) That Mr. McCarthy should transfer this memorandum to your custody, and that if, after a consultation between yourself and myself, it should be found that its terms are satisfactory, I should forthwith announce my retirement from the chairmanship of the party. (3) That

the terms of this memorandum should not be disclosed to any other person until after the introduction of the Home Rule Bill, and not then unless this Bill failed to carry out those terms; but that if the Bill were satisfactory I should be permitted to publish the memorandum after the passing of the former into law. I would agree that instead of adopting the limit of two years as the period in which the constabulary should be disarmed and turned into a civil force, and handed over to the Irish Executive, the term might be extended to five years; but I regard the fixing of some term of years for this in the Bill of the most vital importance. I also send you the inclosed copy of the clause of the Bill of 1886 relating to the Metropolitan Police and Constabulary. I do not think it necessary to insist upon the charge for the latter during the period of probation being paid out of the Imperial funds, as I do not wish to increase Mr. Gladstone's difficulties.

'P.S.—It should be noted that Gladstone can scarcely refuse to communicate with Mr. McCarthy on these subjects, as, in his letter to the delegates, he stated that as soon as the question of the leadership of the party was settled he would be in a position to open confidential communications again, and he has publicly acknowledged Mr. McCarthy's election as valid.'

It will be seen by this letter that Parnell simply held the ground which he had taken up in Committee Room 15. There he had said: 'If you sell me, see that you get value.'

The value he suggested was satisfactory assurances from the Liberal party on the subjects of the

land and the police. The only new condition which he imported was, that he and Mr. O'Brien should alone be the judges of the satisfactoriness of the Liberal assurances. To this letter Mr. O'Brien replied:

Mr. O'Brien to Parnell

'4th, 1st, '91.

'My dear Mr. Parnell,—I received your letter, and have given as much thought as I was able to the important proposal it contained. If, as on the first reading of your letter there seemed to be some likelihood, you were disposed to drop the objection to McCarthy's continuance in the chairmanship, the new proposal would seem to diminish the difficulties of conciliating English opinion. If, however, your first determination on that point remains unchanged, the necessity which the Hawarden plan involves, of employing McCarthy in a transaction so painful to himself personally would seem to me to raise a formidable obstacle to that form of securing the guarantees desired. I have been turning the matter over in my mind as to another way in which equally satisfactory results might be obtained, and when we meet in Boulogne on Tuesday I hope to be able to submit it with sufficient definiteness to enable us to thrash it out with some prospect of an immediate and satisfactory agreement. Those who are bent on thwarting peace at any price are building great hopes upon delays or breakdowns of our Boulogne negotiations; but I am beginning to entertain some real hope that with promptness and good feeling on both sides we may still be able to hit upon some agreement that will relieve the country from an appalling prospect, and

that neither you nor I will have any reason to regret hereafter.

'Believe me, my dear Mr. Parnell,

'Ever sincerely yours,

'WILLIAM O'BRIEN.'

Besides sending this letter to Parnell, Mr. O'Brien despatched the following telegram to Mr. Harrington:

Mr. O'Brien to Mr. Harrington

[TELEGRAM]

'Does new proposal mean withdrawal objection to McCarthy continuing chairman? Letter not clear on that point. If McCarthy continues chairman think new proposal feasible, and would do best to carry it out.'

Mr. Harrington replied:

Mr. Harrington to Mr. O'Brien

[TELEGRAM]

'Proposal is subject to your acceptance of chairmanship, and you alone. We are with Chief in that. He would depend on you alone to consider his feelings and consult. Your message raises my hopes. God bless your efforts.'

The 'other way' referred to by Mr. O'Brien, 'in which equally satisfactory results might be obtained,' was: (1) election of Mr. O'Brien as chairman; (2) visit of Mr. O'Brien to Hawarden to obtain assurances from Mr. Gladstone; (3) resignation of Mr. O'Brien if the assurances were not satisfactory, and his adhesion to Parnell.

It must not be supposed that in making this proposal Mr. O'Brien was animated by motives of personal

ambition. Far from it. He had no desire to become chairman of the party; his sole object in these negotiations was to make peace, and finding Parnell strongly opposed to the chairmanship of Mr. McCarthy and Mr. Dillon, he made this suggestion in the hope of getting over the difficulty. He thought it was unreasonable to send Mr. McCarthy to Hawarden on the understanding that, whether he got satisfactory assurances or not, he should retire from the chair. Mr. Redmond was, as I have said, in Paris at this time, and knew all about Mr. O'Brien's new plan. On January 5 he wired to Parnell: 'O'Brien wrote you yesterday. Let nothing prevent your meeting us to-morrow.'

On Tuesday, January 6, Parnell came to Boulogne. 'I saw him alone first,' says Mr. Redmond, 'and we had a short private talk about O'Brien's new plan. He said nothing, but looked at me with an amused, and an amusing, smile. I could not help feeling what a pair of children O'Brien and I were in the hands of this man. The meaning of the smile was as plain as words. It meant: "Well, really, you are excellent fellows, right good fellows, but 'pon my soul a d——d pair of fools; sending William O'Brien to Hawarden to negotiate with Mr. Gladstone! Delightful." Well, he simply smiled William O'Brien's plan out of existence, and stuck to his original proposal. Next day he went back to London, and I went with him.'

On January 9 Mr. O'Brien (who had been all the time in communication with Mr. McCarthy, Mr. Sexton, and Mr. Dillon) wired to Parnell from Boulogne: 'McCarthy and Sexton come to-day; difficulties with D.'

Parnell continued to stick with characteristic tenacity to his original position:

(1) Satisfactory assurances from the Liberals.

(2) Parnell and O'Brien alone to be judges of the satisfactoriness of the assurances.

Mr. O'Brien tried to persuade him to allow Mr. McCarthy to have a voice in deciding the question, but in vain.

Mr. O'Brien to Parnell

[Telegram]

'Boulogne: January 18.

'Indications favourable, presume no objection to McCarthy's voice as to satisfactoriness of assurances if obtained.'

Parnell to Mr. O'Brien

[Limerick]

'While at all times willing to consult with McCarthy upon any points of special difficulty which may from time to time arise, I am obliged to ask that the terms of the memorandum shall be adhered to, which provide that you and I shall be the sole and final judges.'

On one point only Parnell gave way. He agreed finally to accept Mr. Dillon as chairman of the party.

While these letters and telegrams were passing Mr. O'Brien was in touch with the Liberal leaders, and towards the end of January he received assurances which he seems to have regarded as more or less satisfactory. By this time also Mr. Dillon had arrived in France from America, and on January 30 Mr. O'Brien wired to Parnell to come to Calais for further consultation.

Mr. O'Brien to Parnell

[TELEGRAM]

'January 30.

'Just received materials for final decision. Most important you should see [them] at once. If you could cross to Calais, or anywhere else to-night, would meet you with Dillon.'

Parnell went to Calais, and met Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Dillon. The Liberal assurances were then submitted to him, and he considered them unsatisfactory; but this was not the only trouble. Mr. O'Brien had looked forward with hope to the meeting between Parnell and Mr. Dillon. He believed the meeting would make for peace. He was woefully disappointed. Mr. Dillon succeeded completely in getting Parnell's back up, adding seriously to the difficulties of the situation. He seemed specially to have offended Parnell by proposing that he (Mr. Dillon) should have a voice in the distribution of the Paris funds. These funds were held by three trustees, of whom Parnell was one. It was agreed that any two of the trustees might draw on the funds, provided that Parnell was always one of the two. Mr. Dillon now proposed that the funds might be drawn without the intervention of Parnell; that, in fact, Mr. Dillon should take the place that Parnell had hitherto held. Parnell scornfully brushed aside this proposal, and broke off relations with Mr. Dillon altogether, though to the end he remained on friendly terms with Mr. O'Brien.

On February 4 he wrote to Dr. Kenny: 'I went to Calais on Monday night to see O'Brien; he had received the draft of a letter proposed to be written,

and purporting to meet my requirements, but I found it of an illusory character, and think that I succeeded in showing him that it was so. He will endeavour to obtain the necessary amendments to the draft.'

The Calais meeting seems to have been a turning point in the negotiations, and Parnell's next letter—a masterpiece in diplomatic *finesse*—was couched in less conciliatory terms. It was addressed to Mr. Gill, an Anti-Parnellite Irish member, who was a channel of communication between Mr. O'Brien and Parnell, and between Mr. Morley and Mr. O'Brien.

Parnell to Mr. Gill

'February 5, 1891.

'MY DEAR GILL,—I have carefully considered the position created by the information conveyed to me by you yesterday, as to the new proposals and demands of the Liberal leaders, and it appears to me to be a very grave one, and to add materially to the difficulties attending a peaceable solution. You will remember that under the memorandum of agreement arrived at between O'Brien and myself more than a month since at Boulogne it was provided that the judgment as to whether the intentions of Mr. Gladstone were in accordance upon certain vital points with the views expressed in that agreement was to be given by myself and O'Brien acting in conjunction, and that I have since felt myself obliged to decline a proposal from O'Brien to add another person to our number for the performance of that duty. In addition you are aware that last Tuesday I met O'Brien at Calais for the purpose of coming to a final decision with him as to the sufficiency of a draft memorandum respecting the views of the Liberal leaders which he had obtained,

and which, although at first sight it appeared to him to be sufficient, after a consultation with me was found to require considerable alteration and modification in order to secure the necessary guarantees regarding the vital points in question.

'You now inform me that a new condition is insisted upon for the continuance of further negotiations—viz. that the question of the sufficiency of the guarantee is to be decided upon by O'Brien apart from me, and in conjunction with I know not whom, that he is to see the draft of the proposed public statement, and that he must bind himself to accept it as satisfactory before it is published, while I am not to be permitted to see it, to judge of its satisfactory character, or to have a voice in the grave and weighty decision which O'Brien and certain unknown persons were thus called upon to give on my behalf as well as his own. I desire to say that I fully recognise the candour which O'Brien has shown in this matter, and the absence of any disposition on his part to depart either from the spirit or the letter of our agreement without my knowledge and consent. It is unnecessary for me to enlarge upon the humiliating and disgraceful position in which this fresh attempt at exaction on the part of the Liberal leaders would seem intended to place me. It suffices to say that my own self-respect—nor, I am confident, that of the Irish people—would permit me to occupy it for a single moment. Besides this consideration, I could not, with any regard for my public responsibility and declarations upon the vital points in reference to which assurances are required, surrender into unknown hands, or even into the hands of O'Brien, my right as to the sufficiency of those assurances and guarantees. But within the last twenty hours information of a most startling

character has reached me from a reliable source, which may render it necessary for me to widen my position in these negotiations. It will be remembered that during the Hawarden communication the one point of the form upon which the views of the Liberal leaders were not definitely and clearly conveyed to me was that regarding the question of the retention of the Irish members at Westminster. It was represented to me that the unanimous opinion was in favour of permanently retaining a reduced number, thirty-four, as the symbol of Imperial unity, but not with a view of affording grounds, occasions, or pretexts for Imperial interference in Irish national concerns, it being held most properly that the permanent retention of a large number would afford such grounds.

'But from the information recently conveyed to me referred to above, it would appear that this decision has been reconsidered, and that it is now most probable that the Irish members in their full strength will be permanently retained. This prospect, following so closely upon the orders of the "Pall Mall Gazette" that it must be so, is ominous and most alarming.

'In 1886 the second reading of the Home Rule Bill, as I can prove by documentary evidence, was lost because the Liberal leaders declined till too late to agree to the retention of any Irish members in any shape or for any purpose. This resolve was formed because the Irish party from 1880 to 1885 have proved their independence, courage, and steadiness on many a hard-fought field, and it was felt necessary to get rid of them at any cost. But the majority of the party of to-day having lost their independence and proved their devotion to the Liberal leaders, it is considered desirable to keep them permanently at Westminster for the

purpose of English Radicalism, and as a standing pretext for the exercise of the veto of the Imperial Parliament over the legislation of the Irish body.

'I refrain at present from going further into the matter, but will conclude by saying that so long as the degrading condition referred to at the commencement of this letter is insisted upon by the Liberal leaders, I do not see how I can be a party to the further progress of the negotiations.

'My dear Gill,

'Yours very truly,

'CHAS. S. PARNELL.'

Mr. Gill replied instantly, praying for an 'immediate interview,' and saying that the 'first part of your letter is founded on a misunderstanding which I can remove.'

Parnell answered:

Parnell to Mr. Gill

February 6, '91.

MY DEAR GILL,—I have your letter of last night, and note that you say that the first part of mine to you of yesterday is founded on a misunderstanding which you can remove. Although I cannot see where there is any room on my part for misunderstanding the information which you conveyed, I shall be very glad if it should turn out as you say, and in that case of course the negotiations could be resumed. Will you, then, kindly write and explain what the misunderstanding was and how you think it can be removed, as I fear it may not be possible for me to see you at the House of Commons this evening?

'Yours very truly,

'CHAS. S. PARNELL.'

Mr. Gill wrote once more saying that he knew 'nothing whatever about these conditions and proposals on the part of the Liberal leaders of which you speak'; adding, 'if anything I said in our conversation led you to form such an impression, it was an entire misapprehension, arising possibly out of my own eagerness in hoping that these prolonged negotiations might be brought to an end as quickly as possible without further delay.'

Parnell replied:

Parnell to Mr. Gill

February 7, '91.

'My dear Gill,—I am writing O'Brien by this evening's post upon the subject of our conversation on Wednesday, and for the present perhaps it would be better that the negotiations should be conducted by correspondence between himself and me. As regards your note just received, I am sorry that I cannot agree with you that it gives at all an accurate account of the information you then conveyed to me, although while you expressly stated the conditions, new to me, of the Liberal leaders, I agree that you did not say that you spoke to me on behalf of them or at their request, nor did I so intimate in my letter of Thursday.

'Sincerely yours,

'Chas. S. Parnell.'

On February 8 Mr. O'Brien wrote to Parnell: 'There is not a shadow of foundation for the story which appears to have reached you of new proposals and demands of the Liberal leaders.' On February 9 he wrote again: 'What a woeful thing it would be if negotiations were broken off "under the

influence of a misunderstanding for which there is not the smallest shred or shadow of foundation,'' ' speaking of the 'atrocious calumnies' to which he had been subjected for trying to 'preserve you from humiliation,' deploring the 'unspeakably sad and tragic' turn affairs had taken, and 'weeping over the terrible state of things that is before the country.'

The Chief replied impassively:

Parnell to Mr. O'Brien

February 10, '91.

'My dear O'Brien,—I have received your kind notes of the 8th and 9th instant, and I fully join with you in the expression regarding the unhappy situation that would be created if the negotiations were to be broken off owing to any misunderstanding. But I have been much desirous since Wednesday of ascertaining the nature of the alleged misunderstanding, with a view to its removal, and up to the present have entirely failed in obtaining any light, either from your letters or those of Gill. Perhaps, however, I can facilitate matters by relating as clearly as possible what it was that fell from the latter at our second interview on Wednesday, which gave rise to my letter of Thursday. You will remember that as requested by your telegram of Friday week, advising me that you had obtained the materials for a final decision, I met you at Calais on Monday week for the purpose of joining you in coming to a decision as to whether the intentions of Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues were in accordance with the views expressed in my original memorandum of agreement with you. You then showed me a memorandum which you stated was the substance of a public letter which Mr. Gladstone was willing to write, con-

veying the assurance regarding the questions of the constabulary and the land. You seemed of opinion that such a letter in such terms would satisfy my conditions. But I was obliged to differ from you, and hoped that I had been so fortunate as to convince you of the reasonable character of my objections, for you asked me to amend the memorandum in such a way as to cause it to carry out my views on the subject of the constabulary. This was done, and it was arranged that I should meet Gill in London the next day for the purpose of further considering the land branch, and to confirm that portion referring to the constabulary after reference to the statutes. It was at this interview that the origin of the present trouble arose. In speaking of the future course of the negotiations, I understood Gill to state distinctly that the Liberal leaders required to be assured that you would be satisfied with their proposed declaration before they made it, and that I was not to see the memorandum or know the particulars of the document upon which your judgment was to be given. I assumed that you would receive a memorandum as at Calais, on which you would be required to form and announce your judgment apart from me. I do not know whether I am entitled to put you any questions, but if you think not do not hesitate to decline to answer them. Are you expected to form your judgment on the sufficiency of the proposed assurances before they are made public? If so, what materials and of what character do you expect to receive for this purpose? And will you be able to share with me the facilities thus afforded to you, so that we may, if possible, come to a joint decision?

'Is it true, as indicated by a portion of your letter of the 8th, that you have already formed an affirmative

opinion as to the sufficiency of the memorandum you showed to me at Calais? I have not time at present to advert to what I consider the great change produced in the situation by several of the pastoral letters of the members of the hierarchy just published. They create great doubts in my mind as to whether the peace we are struggling for is at all possible, and as to whether we are not compelled to face even greater and larger issues than those yet raised in this trouble.

'Yours very truly,

'CHAS. S. PARNELL.'

A short time afterwards the negotiations were broken off, and Mr. Dillon and Mr. O'Brien returned to England. They were immediately arrested and lodged in Galway Gaol, where they remained, without giving any sign, for four or five months. At the end of that time they came out and declared against Parnell. So the Boulogne negotiations—the 'so-called negotiations,' as a distinguished Liberal scornfully said to me—came to an end; not, however, until the Liberal leaders had given some assurances anent the forthcoming Home Rule Bill. These assurances were in the following terms: (1) The land question was either to be settled by the Imperial Parliament simultaneously with the establishment of Home Rule or within a limited period thereafter to be specified in the Home Rule Bill, or the power to deal with it was to be given to the Irish Parliament. (2) The Irish constabulary was to be converted by degrees, within a period not to exceed five years, into a purely civil force under the complete control of the Irish Parliament.[1]

The question has been raised whether Parnell meant

[1] *Annual Register*, 1891.

business in these Boulogne conferences; whether he went into the negotiations with the intention of making peace, or only for strategic purposes in carrying on the war. I asked an Anti-Parnellite who was concerned in the negotiations to give me his opinion on the point. He said it was perhaps hard to tell; but on the whole he inclined to the view that there were moments when Parnell meant peace, and that again there were moments when he used the negotiations merely for strategic purposes. Other Anti-Parnellites were of opinion that the Chief was playing a strategic game all the time, and playing it with his accustomed skill.

What was his strategy? To divide the Anti-Parnellite forces (1) by drawing Dillon and O'Brien away from Healy; (2) by drawing O'Brien away from Dillon; (3) by out-manœuvring the three in detail; (4) by involving the Liberals in fresh difficulties and bringing them into collision with their Irish allies. In the first object he succeeded completely. Healy's voice was for war *à outrance*, and accordingly the Boulogne negotiations led to the opening of the breach between him and Dillon and O'Brien which has not been closed to this day. In the second object he failed, for O'Brien and Dillon stood together to the end. But he scored a success in another way. Very many people believed that O'Brien was really on the side of Parnell, and that the relations between himself and Dillon were strained if not sundered.

When both went into gaol it was generally thought that O'Brien was a Parnellite and Dillon an Anti-Parnellite. O'Brien's ultimate declaration against Parnell on leaving gaol caused a revulsion of popular feeling against him which he has not recovered yet. Some said: 'Why did he pose as the friend of Parnell and

desert the Chief in the end?' Others said: 'Why did he waste time over these Boulogne negotiations? If he were not a fool he would have known that nothing could have come of them.' One set of people lost faith in his heart, another lost faith in his head. To this hour the Boulogne negotiations are a stick with which Mr. Healy never fails to flagellate Mr. Dillon and Mr. O'Brien. The 'fighting Catholic curates' were driven to Mr. Healy's side by what was called the Boulogne fiasco more than by anything else. 'Some of the seceders,' said Parnell with bitter scorn—'the majority of them—have changed only twice; Mr. Dillon and Mr. O'Brien have changed four times.'

The Liberal leaders looked upon Mr. Dillon and Mr. O'Brien as a pair of simpletons for allowing themselves to be drawn into negotiations with the most superb political strategist of the day, Mr. Gladstone alone excepted. But this was not the worst. There seemed a possibility that the Liberals might be caught in the net which Mr. O'Brien was so innocently helping Parnell to spread. The Liberal tactics were, of course, obvious; Parnell was to be isolated, and O'Brien and Dillon were to be kept out of his hands. The Liberals ultimately succeeded in drawing Dillon and O'Brien out of Parnell's hands, though in so doing they were forced to give assurances which would certainly never have been obtained but for the skilful operations of the Chief.

I saw Parnell frequently during the Boulogne negotiations, and indeed throughout the whole of this last campaign. One evening in the House of Commons I said to him: 'People don't believe in these Boulogne negotiations; they say that you are talking of peace, but that you mean war all the time.' 'Oh, indeed,' he replied, smiling, 'do they? Well, you know if you

want peace you must be ready for war. We must show these people that we are not afraid to fight.'

Another evening at Euston I said to him: 'You want a definite statement from Mr. Gladstone about the next Home Rule Bill——.' 'In writing,' he interpolated. 'Suppose you get it, what will you do?' 'I will tell you that when I read the statement.' I said: 'It is difficult for you to retire now. You might have retired of your own accord—you might have retired at the request of your own people; you cannot retire at the demand of an Englishman. The divorce case is not the issue now. The issue is, whether an Englishman, no matter how friendly, can veto the decision of an Irish party, whether the decision is right or wrong.' 'That is the issue,' he said.

I said: 'You have contracted fresh obligations too. Men who do not belong to your party have come in to help you to fight out this issue; you cannot treat over their heads.' He answered: 'I will consider every man who has helped me in whatever I do.' Afterwards he added: 'Some good may come out of these negotiations. We may pin the Liberals to something definite yet.'

CHAPTER XXVI

NEARING THE END

WHILE the Boulogne negotiations were proceeding Parnell continued to carry on the war in Ireland; he rested not a day, not an hour. Every Saturday night he left London for Dublin. On Sunday he addressed a meeting in some part of the country. On Monday he was back in Dublin again to confer with his followers there, and to direct operations. On Tuesday he returned to London, attended occasionally at the House of Commons, crossed when necessary to Boulogne, sometimes addressed meetings in England, and on Saturday started afresh to Ireland.

'You are over-doing it,' I said to him one night when he looked fatigued and harassed. 'Yes,' he rejoined, 'I am doing the work of ten men; but (suddenly) I feel right well. It does me good.' There was nothing that displeased him more than the least suggestion that he could not stand this constant strain.

In April there was an election in North Sligo. Parnell put up a candidate; but he was beaten, after a fierce fight, though not by so large a majority as the Anti-Parnellites had commanded in Kilkenny. In July there was another election in Carlow. Parnell again put up a candidate, and he was again beaten. But these defeats did not relax his efforts. After the

Carlow election he delivered a stirring speech, bidding his followers to be of good cheer and never to despair.

'If,' he said, 'we should happen to be beaten at the next general election, we will form a solid rallying square of the 1,500 good men who voted for Ireland's nationhood in the County Carlow, of the 2,500 heroes who voted for the same cause in North Sligo, and of the 1,400 voters in North Kilkenny who stood by the flag of Irish independence.'[1]

I saw him often in London during his flying visits, when he received reports and gave directions about the Parnellite organisation in England. Sometimes he was little disposed to talk, on other occasions he was unusually conversational.

One evening we sat together in the Smoking-room of the House of Commons. He smoked a cigar, sipped a cup of tea or coffee, and looked restful and almost genial. When the business which I had come to talk about was disposed of, he said suddenly and *à propos* of nothing, 'What do you think of English alliances?' I said that I thought an Irish alliance with an English party was a mistake, for the English party and for the Irish. I referred to the case of O'Connell's alliance with the Melbourne Ministry. He said, 'I know nothing about that. I am very ignorant.' I smiled. 'Yes,' he said, 'I mean what I say. I am very

[1] 'I have a recollection of Mr. Parnell at the Carlow election,' says Mr. Patrick O'Brien, M.P. 'I repeated to him one of the election ballads. "Oh!" said he, "you must sing it." I had been speaking all day, and I was as hoarse as an old crow, but he insisted, and I had to sing it as well as I could. Next day there was a meeting in the market place. I made a speech, and in the course of it referred to the ballad again. It was very spicy, and I quoted the first verse. Parnell turned round and said: "Sing it, sing it." Of course I refused, but he kept poking me in the ribs all the time, saying: "Sing it," and a number of fellows on the platform, seeing he was bent on it, joined him. But I held out. The whole thing seemed to have amused him immensely.'

ignorant of these things. I have read very little, but I am smart, and can pick up information quickly. Whatever you tell me about O'Connell you will find I will remember.' I then told him the story of the Melbourne alliance, so far as I was able; pointing out how it had ended in O'Connell's plunging into repeal, and in the Liberals afterwards fighting shy of Irish questions until the Fenian outbreak. The upshot of the alliance, I said, was that O'Connell lost faith in the British Parliament, and the Liberals felt that they had burned their fingers over Ireland, and accordingly tried to keep clear of the subject in the future. 'I agree,' he said; 'an English alliance is no use. It is a mistake to negotiate with an Englishman. He knows the business better than you do. He has had better training, and he is sure, sooner or later, to get you on a bit of toast. You must keep within your own lines and be always ready to fight until you get what you want. I gained nothing by meeting Mr. Gladstone. I was no match for him. He got more out of me than I ever got out of him.' 'Why,' I asked, 'did you make a close alliance with the Liberals in 1886?' 'Some change had to be made,' he answered. 'You see, they had come round to Home Rule. We could not go on fighting them as we did before their surrender.' 'But then, a close alliance was a mistake,' I said; 'even a Liberal said to me that it would have been better for the Irish and the Liberals to have moved on parallel lines than on the same line.' 'I did not,' he answered, 'want a close alliance. I did not make a close alliance. I kept away from the Liberals as much as I could. You do not know how much they tried to get at me, how much I was worried. But I tried to keep away from them as much as I had ever done. I knew the danger of getting

mixed up with English statesmen. They only make you give way, and I gave way a great deal too much.' 'Your people made a close alliance with the Liberals,' I said. 'I could not help that,' he answered. 'They ought to have known my wishes. They knew all the time I had been in public life I avoided Englishmen. I did not want them to rush into English clubs, or into English Society, as it is called. You talk of O'Connell. What would O'Connell have done in my position?' I answered: 'The difference between you and O'Connell is, that he always remained at the wheel, you often let others run the ship.' 'Ah!' he replied with energy, 'that was my mistake, I admit it. I have not denied my faults. I committed many mistakes; that was the greatest. They call me a dictator. I was not dictator enough. I allowed them to do too much. But (clenching his fist and placing it quietly on the table) that will not happen again. It is called my party. It is everybody's party more than mine. I suppose you think that I have nominated every member of the party. I have not; other people nominate them. Look at —— (nodding his head towards an Irish member who sat some distance from us). How did he get into Parliament? I will tell you. C—— (nodding his head in the direction of another Irish member), C—— came to me and said, "Mr. —— (I had never heard of him before) would make a useful member. He is a Protestant, he is a landlord, he is an Oxford man, and he is a good speaker. He would be useful in the English constituencies." "Well," I said, "take him," and that was how Mr. —— came into Parliament. I dare say he makes pretty speeches, and I suppose he thinks himself a great Irish representative. I could give you other cases of the same kind. Most

of those men got in in this way.' I said: 'Still you are responsible. All these men owe their political existence to you.' 'I admit my responsibility. I am telling you what was the practice. I did not build up a party of personal adherents. I took the nominees of others,' he rejoined. 'I do not say I was blameless. I have never said it. But was I to have no rest, was I to be always on the watch?' I broke in: 'A dictator can have no rest, he must be always on the watch.' Without heeding the interruption, he went on, as was his wont, to finish his own train of thought: 'Was no allowance to be made for me? I can assure you I am a man always ready to make allowances for everyone.' He then shook the ashes from his cigar, stood up, and without another word walked out on the Terrace.

Parnell was right. There was no man more ready to make allowances, no man more ready to forgive and to forget. A member of the party had (in the days before the split) grossly insulted him. This individual was subsequently driven out of the National ranks, though not for this reason, but for his Whig leanings. Afterwards it was suggested that he should be brought back. Parnell at once accepted the suggestion. 'Parnell was quite willing,' this ex-M.P. said to me, 'to take me back, but Healy and Dillon objected, and the matter was let drop.' During the Special Commission it was suggested that Mr. Healy (for whom Parnell could have had no love after the Galway election) should hold a brief. Parnell consented at once. But Davitt strongly objected, and the suggestion was not, therefore, carried out. 'Healy,' said an old Fenian to Parnell, 'seems to have the best political head of all these people.' 'He has the only political head among them,' rejoined Parnell.

In some of his speeches Parnell had made personal attacks on Mr. Gladstone. I thought these attacks undeserved and told him so. He said: 'What have I said?' I replied, 'You remember as well as I.' 'I called him an old gentleman,' he said. 'Well, he is an old gentleman; there is no harm in that.' I said: 'I wish you would take this matter seriously.' 'Well, but,' he repeated, 'what have I said? What have I called him? Tell me.' 'Well,' I rejoined—'you will probably smile, but it is not, after all, a smiling matter—you called him "a grand old spider."' I met Morley (who is not unfriendly to you) in the Lobby and he said, "Do you think I can have anything to do with a man who called Mr. Gladstone 'a grand old spider'?"' Parnell smiled and answered: 'I think that is complimentary—spinning all kinds of webs and devices, that's just what he does.' I said: 'I wish you would take this matter seriously. It is really unworthy of you. No man has avoided personalities all these years more than you. Why should you descend to them now?' Parnell (angrily): 'You all come to me to complain. I am fighting with my back to the wall, and every blow I hit is criticised by my friends. You all forget how I am attacked. You only come to find fault with me. You are all against me.' I said: 'I do not think you ought to say that. If I were against you I would not be here. I do not come as Mr. Gladstone's friend; I come as yours, because I feel it is unworthy of you.' 'You are right,' he said, suddenly placing his hand on my shoulder; 'personal abuse is wrong. I have said these things and forgotten them as soon as I have said them. But you are right in talking about it.'

Upon another occasion I said that Mr. Gladstone deserved well of Ireland, adding, 'Almost all that has

been done for Ireland in my time has been done by Mr. Gladstone—Gladstone *plus* Fenianism, and *plus* you.' We then talked about the Fenians and separation. I said: 'Every Irish Nationalist would go for separation if he thought he could get it; we are all Home Rulers because we do not believe separation is possible.' After a pause he said, showing no disposition to continue the subject: 'I have never gone for separation. I never said I would. The physical force men understand my position very well. I made it clear to them that I would be satisfied with a Parliament, and that I believed in our constitutional movement; but I also said that if our constitutional movement failed, I could not then stand in the way of any man who wished to go further and to try other means. That was the position I always took up. I have never changed, and I still believe in our constitutional movement. I believe that with our own Parliament, if England does not meddle, we can build up our country.' I said: '——,' naming an old Fenian, 'says that there has been too much land and too little nationality in your movement all the time.' 'Does he suggest,' rejoined Parnell, with a slight touch of sarcasm, 'that the land should have been neglected?' 'No,' I rejoined, 'but he thinks that you allowed it to overshadow the National movement.'

Parnell. 'That could not have been helped. Remember the crisis of 1879. There was distress and famine; the tenants rushed the movement. Besides, the claims of the tenants were just in themselves, and ought to have been taken up.' 'The Fenians,' I said, 'are the real Nationalist force in Ireland.' 'That is true,' he rejoined.

One of our last talks was about the Liberal leaders and the progress of Home Rule in England. He

spoke of the seceders. 'What do they expect?' he said. 'Do they think that Home Rule is so near that anyone may carry it through now?' I replied: 'That is what they do think. I heard that one of them said: "The ship has crossed the ocean. She is coming into port. Anyone can do the rest."' A faint smile was the only response. 'Do they think,' he continued, 'that the Liberal leaders will carry Home Rule? I say nothing about Mr. Gladstone now, but remember Mr. Gladstone is an old man. He cannot live for ever. I agree that he means to establish some kind of Irish Parliament. What kind? That is the question I have always raised. He will be satisfied if he gives us any kind of Parliament. He is an old man, and he cannot wait. I am a young man, and I can afford to wait. I want a Parliament that we shall be able to keep and to work for our country, and if we do not get it this year or next I can wait for half a dozen years; but it must be a real Parliament when it comes. I grant you all you say about Mr. Gladstone's power and intentions to establish a Parliament of some kind, but Home Rule will not come in his time. We have to look to his successors. Depend upon it I am saying what is true. Who will be his successors? Who are the gentlemen whom the seceders trust? Name them to me, and I will tell you what I think.'

I named Mr. Morley. 'Yes,' said Parnell, 'Mr. Morley has a good record. I have always said that. But has Mr. Morley any influence in England? Do you think that Mr. Morley has the power to carry Home Rule? Will England follow him? Will the Liberal party follow him? I do not think that Morley has any following in the country.'

I said: 'Well, there is Asquith. He is a coming

man. Some people say he may be the Liberal leader of the future.'

Parnell. 'Yes, Mr. Asquith is a coming man, a very clever man; but (looking me straight in the face) do you think Mr. Asquith is very keen about Home Rule? Do you think that he will risk anything for Home Rule? Mr. Asquith won't trouble about Home Rule, take my word for that.'

I said: 'There is Campbell-Bannerman. I hear that he is a very good fellow, and he made about as good an Irish Secretary as any of them.' 'Yes,' he replied, 'I dare say he is a very good fellow, and as an Irish Secretary he left things alone (with a droll smile)—a sensible thing for an Irish Secretary. If they do not know anything they had better do nothing.' I said: 'The most objectionable Englishman is the Englishman who suddenly wakes up and imagines he has discovered Ireland—the man who comes to you and says: "You know I was a Home Ruler before Mr. Gladstone."'

Parnell. 'Indeed, do they say that?'

'Oh yes,' I replied. 'The first time I met Hugh Price Hughes he said: "Why, you know I was a Home Ruler before Mr. Gladstone."'

Parnell (passing over this irrelevant remark) said: 'But do you think that Campbell-Bannerman has any influence? He is not going to lead the Liberal party. I think he has no influence.'

I said: 'Lord Rosebery. He has influence.'

Parnell. 'I know nothing about Lord Rosebery. Probably he has influence. But do you think he is going to use it for Home Rule? Do you think he knows anything about Home Rule or cares anything about it?'

I said: 'Sir William Harcourt.'

Parnell. 'Ah, now you have come to the point. I have been waiting for that.' Then, turning fully round and facing me, he continued: 'What do you think of Sir William Harcourt? He will be the Liberal leader when Mr. Gladstone goes. Do you think he will trouble himself about Home Rule? He will think only of getting his party together, and he will take up any question that will best help him to do that. Mark what I say. Sir William Harcourt will have to be fought again.'

'Do you think,' I asked, 'that the Home Rule movement, the movement for an Irish Parliament, has made any real progress in England?'

'It has taken no root,' he answered, 'but our movement has made some progress.'

'The land question,' I said, 'has made progress. The labour movement here has helped it; the cry against coercion has told. But has the demand for an Irish Parliament made way? Do the English electors understand it? Do they really know the difference between Home Rule and Local Government? I doubt it.'

He said: 'I think we are hammering it into them by degrees. You must never expect the English to be enthusiastic about Home Rule. I have always said that. But they are beginning to see the difficulties of governing Ireland. They find they cannot do it, and Home Rule must come out of that.'

'Well,' I said, 'I do not know that. If Mr. Gladstone were to say to-morrow that Local Government would do after all, they would turn round at once and say that Home Rule and Local Government were the same thing.'

'Yes,' he said, 'that is true; but we have only to

keep pounding away and to take care that they do not go back. They will not work it out in the way you think. They will find Ireland impossible to govern, and then they will give us what we want. That is what will happen. We must show them our power. They will bow to nothing but power, I assure you. If we hold together there is nothing that we cannot do in that House.'

I said: 'Hold together! There is an end to that for a long time. It will take you ten years to pull the country together again.'

'No,' he rejoined very quietly; 'I will do it in five years—that is what I calculate.'

'Well, Gladstone will be dead then,' I said. 'The whole question to me is, you and Mr. Gladstone. If you both go, Home Rule will go with you for this generation.'

'But I will not go,' he answered angrily; 'I am a young man, and I will not go.' And there was a fierce flash in his eyes which was not pleasant to look at.

The fight went on, and not a ray of hope shone upon Parnell's path. In Ireland the Fenians rallied everywhere to his standard, but the whole power of the Church was used to crush him. In June he married Mrs. O'Shea, and a few weeks later 'young' Mr. Gray,[1] of the 'Freeman's Journal,' seized upon the marriage as a pretext for going over to the enemy, because it was against the law of the Catholic Church to marry a divorced woman. But Parnell, amid all reverses, never lost heart. On the defection of the 'Freeman's Journal' he set immediately to work to found a new morning paper—'The Irish Daily Independent.' He still continued to traverse the country,

[1] Son of Mr. Dwyer Gray, M.P., who died in 1888.

cheering his followers, and showing a bold front to his foes. At moments he had fits of depression and melancholy. He did not wish to be alone. He would often —a most unusual thing for him—talk for talking's sake. He would walk the streets of Dublin with a follower far into the night, rather than sit in his hotel by himself. Mr. Patrick O'Brien, M.P., has given me an interesting account of Parnell in one of his sad and gloomy moods:

'I saw a good deal of him during the last campaign. He used often to feel very lonely, and never wished to be long by himself. One afternoon we had been at the National League together. Afterwards we returned to Parnell's hotel—Morrison's. While we were dining an English lady was sitting near us at another table. She had a little dog, and was putting him through various tricks. But the favourite trick was this. She made the dog stand on his hind legs, and then said, "Now, Tot, cheer for the Queen"; whereupon the dog would bark. This tickled Parnell very much. He would wink at me and say in his quiet, shy way: "I think this is intended for us." He asked me to stay to dinner. I had, as a matter of fact, made an appointment with his sister, Mrs. Dickinson, to take her to the opera to see Madame ——, and after the dinner I was anxious to get away to meet Mrs. Dickinson. I did not tell Parnell anything about the matter, because I thought he would not care to come to the theatre, and would not be bothered about it generally. He saw that I was anxious to get away, and he said: "Do you want to get away? If you have nothing special to do, I should like you to stop with me, as I feel rather lonely."

'I then said: "Well, the fact is, Mr. Parnell, I am thinking of going to the theatre."

'"Oh," he said, "it is twenty-four years since I was at a theatre, and I think I should like to go."

'I said: "Very well. Shall I get places for both of us?" and he said: "Yes, I think I should like to go."

'I then went off to the National League, very glad, because I thought I should have a surprise both for Mrs. Dickinson and Parnell, as neither would expect the other to come. When I got to the National League I found a telegram from Mrs. Dickinson's daughter saying her mother had been out hunting, and that there was no chance of her being back in time to come to the theatre. I then returned to Parnell, and we both set off for the Gaiety. The place was tremendously full, and when I came to the box-office the box-keeper looked out and saw Parnell standing in the doorway. He said to me: "Is that the Chief?"

'I said: "Yes."

'He said: "Then he wants to come in?"

'I said: "Yes."

'"Well," said he, "the house is full, but he must come in no matter what happens." We then went to the dress circle, getting a front place. Parnell's appearance created quite a sensation. The opera had just commenced, but people kept turning round constantly, looking at him. He got a book of the opera, and seemed to follow the performance with great interest, making remarks to me now and then when he was pleased. As soon as the curtain fell on the first act everyone turned round—stalls, dress circle, pit, boxes—to level their opera-glasses at him. A number of men—high Tories—came out of the stalls and walked along the passage at the back of the circle, looking at him through the glass partition.

'He seemed quite unconscious of all this. There was no cheering, but a murmur of satisfaction and great curiosity. When the opera was over a tremendous crowd collected outside to watch him leave. He said to me: "Now we shall go away." He had not the most remote conception of the excitement which his presence caused, and he thought he might walk away as an ordinary spectator; but the truth was all the passages were blocked, and the street was simply impassable in front.

'I said: "Well, the fact is, Mr. Parnell, you cannot get away unless you walk on the heads of the people outside."

'He smiled and said, "Oh, very well, we will wait if you like, or perhaps there may be a secret way by which we can get out."

'There was a secret way, and the officials of the theatre got us out by a side door, and so we escaped the throng. As we walked along Grafton Street he said: "I remember there used to be a very good oyster shop somewhere here; let us go and have some oysters." We could not find out the shop, though I discovered afterwards it was Bailey's. However, I knew another supper place, and we went there. The manager of the place was delighted to see Parnell. We walked upstairs, and had a room to ourselves. The manager asked Parnell to put his name in his autograph book. Parnell said, "Certainly," and when he opened the book the first name that caught his eye, amid a host of celebrities, was his mother's. "Oh," said he, "has my mother been here too?" as he signed his name.

'We remained until two in the morning.

'We then walked to Morrison's, and I bade him

good-bye, and prepared to set out for the National Club. Parnell said: "Well, I think I will walk with you to the National Club," and away we went. When we got to the National Club, of course I returned to Morrison's with Parnell, and when we got there he said: "I think I will come back with you to the National Club again." "Well, Mr. Parnell," I said, "if you do, we will keep walking about the streets all the night." He said: "I do not care; I do not like to be alone." However, I insisted on his going to Morrison's, and went off to the Club.'

In September Parnell addressed a meeting in the County Kerry, where he was the guest of Mr. Pierce Mahony, M.P., who has given me some reminiscences of his visit:

'Parnell was a very pleasant man in a house; he spent two nights with us in Kerry during the split. He was very homely. He would like to sit over the fire at night, and talk. He used to talk more during the split than ever before. He was very observant about a house, noticed everything, especially whether the house was warm or not; that was the first thing he noticed. "Your house is nice and warm, Mahony, I like it;" that was the first thing he said when he came. We walked about the fields. I prided myself on having my hedges very neat. After looking around everything he said: "You are very fond of English hedges." I was very much amused. That was the sole commentary on my hedges. He was very fond of children and dogs. He took a particular fancy to one of my boys: Dermot, aged 15. Parnell was, of course, very superstitious. He would not dine thirteen at table. One day a man disappointed us at a dinner party, and we had just thirteen; so we sent

Dermot to dine by himself. This troubled Parnell, and he kept constantly saying at dinner, "That boy ought not to have been sent away." Finally, as soon as Dermot scrambled through his dinner, we sent for him, and gave him a chair away from the table. Parnell laughed at this compromise, and chatted to Dermot, and asked him what he thought of the meeting (at which Parnell had spoken). Dermot said he liked it very much, particularly the fight. Whereupon Parnell said, looking at us all: "Oh, I saw that fight too. It was in the middle of my speech, and made me feel quite nervous and irritable—one fellow took such a long time to hit the other!"'

Throughout the latter months of 1891 the relations between himself and Mr. Justin McCarthy were friendly. 'During the fight of 1891,' says Mr. McCarthy, 'Parnell and I used frequently to meet, and we were always friendly to each other. We had business transactions about the evicted tenants to settle. We were joint trustees. One day we drove in a hansom cab to the House of Commons and entered the Lobby in friendly talk, greatly to the surprise of the members there. One night he came to my house, looking pale and haggard. We sat over the fire, and talked away on various subjects, but made no allusion to the split. When Parnell was going, and just as we stood at the door together, he said: "I am going to the Euston hotel to get a few hours' sleep. I start for Ireland in the morning." I said: "Parnell, are you not over-doing this. No constitution can stand the work you are going through."

'"Oh, yes," he said, "I like it. It is doing me a lot of good!" These were the last words I heard him speak,'

Mr. Russell, a Dublin journalist, has also given me some reminiscences of this time:

'I saw Parnell frequently,' he says, 'during the last eleven months of his life. I went with him to the Limerick meeting. I met him at King's Bridge. He had just arrived from London. We travelled together in the same carriage to Limerick. He said: "I am very tired. I was up until four o'clock this morning signing cheques with Justin McCarthy, and I want to have a sleep. If there should be people at the stations as we go along, do you talk to them. Tell them that I'm tired and unwell, and that I'm taking a rest; unless there is a big crowd, then call me." There were small gatherings of people at the stations as we came along, and I did as he had asked me. When we got to Thurles there was a big crowd. I put my hand on his shoulder and said: "Mr. Parnell, Thurles!" He sprang to his feet at once, put his head through the window, and said: "Men of Tipperary!" dashing off a very effective little speech. The quickness with which he did the thing astonished me. He did not pause for a moment. He might have been awake all the time preparing the speech. He got a great reception in Limerick. He spoke from Cruise's Hotel, and insisted on standing right out on the window sill, while a couple of people inside the room held him by the coat tail.'

I saw Parnell for the last time towards the end of the summer, at Euston Station. He was starting on his weekly visit to Ireland. I was at the station by appointment to talk over some business matters with him. He arrived about ten minutes before the train started. Having despatched the business in his quiet ready way, not in the least disturbed by the bustle on the platform or the

fact that the train would be off in a very short time, he said, quietly and leisurely, 'I should like to know what you think will be the result of the General Election?' I answered: 'I should think that you will come back with about five followers, and I should not be surprised if you came back absolutely alone.' 'Well,' he answered impassively, 'if I do come back absolutely alone, one thing is certain, I shall then represent a party whose independence will not be sapped.' At this point the guard blew his whistle and the train began to move. 'Ah,' said Parnell, 'the train is going,' and, without the least hurry, he walked quietly forward. Several porters rushed up and said: 'Where is your carriage, Mr. Parnell?' He said, 'I have no carriage.' Then a door was opened; the guard said: 'Will you get in here, Mr. Parnell?' 'No,' said he. 'I don't like that.' Then another carriage door was opened. 'No,' said he, 'I don't like that.' The idea of his being left behind seemed never to have occurred to him. The train was slowed down. Parnell walked along, passing one or two carriages; then suddenly he peeped into one, where he saw Mr. Carew, M.P. 'Ah,' said he, 'there is Carew; I'll get in here.' The train by this time was stopped. He got in. Then the train started again; and he lowered the window, and, with a pleasant smile lighting up his pale sad face, waved me a last adieu.

His sister, Mrs. Dickinson, accompanied him to many meetings during this campaign.

'I saw a good deal of him,' she says, 'during the split. I went to meetings with him. I was at one of his last meetings—at Cabinteely. He was in good spirits, and seemed confident of ultimate success. My daughter, of whom he was very fond, was with us. We drove in a

closed carriage to the place of meeting. The people gathered round the carriage in their eagerness to see him, and broke the windows. I thought that a very bad omen, and so did he. He did not say anything, but I could see by his face that the breaking of the glass disturbed him. We always thought it unlucky to break glass. The meeting was very successful, but it rained all the time, and he spoke with his head uncovered. He was, however, greatly pleased with the success of the meeting. He, my daughter, and I dined at Breslin's Hotel at Bray afterwards. He was in capital spirits, and he talked about our younger days, and reminded me of many things I had forgotten. It was a starry night, and he talked to my daughter about the stars and about astrology. I had not seen him so pleasant for a long time. I never saw him again; he was dead within three weeks.'

One of the last letters he wrote was to his mother. Rumours had been circulated that he had treated her badly. He wrote:

'I am weary, dear mother, of these troubles, weary unto death; but it is all in a good cause. With health and the assistance of my friends I am confident of the result. The statements my enemies have so often made regarding my relations with you are on a par with the endless calumnies they shoot upon me from behind every bush. Let them pass. They will die of their own venom. It would indeed be dignifying them to notice their existence!'

The last public meeting Parnell attended was at Creggs on the 27th of September, 1891. He was then very ill. On the Saturday before the meeting he wrote to Dr. Kenny;

'Morrison's Hotel, Dublin: Saturday.

'My dear Doctor,—I shall be very much obliged if you can call over to see me this afternoon, as I am not feeling very well, and oblige

'Yours very truly,

'Chas. S. Parnell.

'Don't mention that I am unwell to anybody, lest it should get into the newspapers.'

He was suffering apparently from acute rheumatism and general debility. Dr. Kenny urged him not to go, but he said that he had given his word to the people, and that he would keep it. He was accompanied by Mr. Quin, of the National League. Two reporters—Mr. Hobson, of the 'Freeman's Journal,' and Mr. Russell—travelled in the carriage with him. 'I accompanied Mr. Parnell to Creggs on his last visit,' says Mr. Hobson. 'Quin was in the carriage with him; he wore his arm in a sling. He sent Quin for me. I joined them. Russell was also with us, and we travelled on together. He talked about the defection of the "Freeman's Journal," and about the new paper he intended to start, "The Irish Daily Independent." The whole conversation was on this subject, and he was very sanguine of success. I went to the meeting before Parnell had arrived. I got a warm reception. The people shouted: "Throw out the 'Freeman' reporter." Things were getting hot for me when a burly figure forced its way through the crowd, and called out, "Where is the 'Freeman' reporter?" A number of angry voices answered "Here." "Mr. Parnell wants him," said the man. The man then beckoned to me, the people made way, and I walked towards him. We then went

to a public-house, where Parnell was seated in a room. He said: "I sent for you, as I thought you might like to have a talk with me before the meeting." The fact was he had heard that they were likely to make it hot for me, and resolved to take me under his wing.'

'I went,' says Mr. Russell, 'with Parnell to Creggs. He said, coming along in the train: "I am very ill. Dr. Kenny told me that I ought not to come, but I have promised these people to come, and I will keep my word!" We stopped at the same hotel. I remember one incident illustrating his superstition. He thought it unlucky to pass anyone on the stairs. I was descending the stairs as he was coming up, with a candlestick in his hand, going to bed. He had got up five or six steps when he saw me. He immediately went back, and remained at the bottom till I came down, and then wished me good-night. He spoke next day. It was raining, and someone raised an umbrella over his uncovered head, but he had it put down immediately. His speech was very laboured at the beginning—so much so that I took down the first part of it in long hand. Afterwards he brightened up and was better. I travelled back to Dublin with him next day at his request. He was very ill and suffered much pain, but he talked all the way and would not let me sleep. He said: "You can take a Turkish bath when you arrive in Dublin, and that will make you all right." We parted at Broadstone terminus, and I never saw him again.'

On arriving in Dublin, Parnell went to the house of his friend Dr. Kenny. There he remained for three days—September 28, 29, and 30—detained by business relating to the establishment of the new paper. He looked ill and fatigued, ate little, and suffered

from acute rheumatic pains in the hand and arm. Each day he said that he would start for England, but something arose to prevent him. At night he would lie on a sofa discussing the situation, talking hopefully of the future, and never appearing to realise the state of his health. 'It is only a matter of time,' he would say; 'the fight may be long or short, but we will win in the end.' On Wednesday, September 30, he attended a meeting of the promoters of the 'Irish Daily Independent.' He looked very poorly, and once felt so weak that some brandy had to be given to him. That night he left Ireland for the last time. Dr. Kenny urged him to remain, saying that he was unfit to travel, that he needed rest and medical treatment, and that the journey might aggravate the symptoms from which he suffered. 'Oh no,' said Parnell, 'I shall be all right. I shall come back next Saturday week.' On reaching London he took a Turkish bath, and then proceeded to his house, 10 Walsingham Terrace, Brighton. He complained that night of a chill, but made light of it. On Saturday he stayed in bed, and seemed to be somewhat better. On Sunday he was worse, and a local doctor was sent for. On Monday the symptoms were still grave, yet on Tuesday Sir Henry Thompson received a letter from him—the last, I think, he ever wrote. 'I cannot show you the letter,' said Sir Henry, 'because it is on professional matters, but I may say that it was well written, describing his symptoms clearly, and, so far as I could judge, bearing no traces of severe illness or suffering. I answered the letter immediately, but, I think, when it reached Brighton Parnell was dead.' Throughout Tuesday, October 6, Parnell suffered much. The rheumatic pains flew to his heart, he

became unconscious from time to time, rallied now and then, but at length, about midnight, expired.

In the forenoon of October 7 the tragic news reached London, causing a profound sensation in all circles. Everywhere it was recognised that one of the greatest figures in British or Irish politics for a century had vanished from the scene.

It was decided that there should be a public funeral, and that he should be buried in Glasnevin Cemetery, Dublin. On Saturday, October 10, the remains were borne from Brighton to Willesden. At Willesden the van containing the coffin was shunted between two sidings, and there it remained for an hour until the arrival of the Irish train from Euston, to which it was then attached.

The platform was thronged by London Irish—men and women—who came to pay a fond tribute of respect to the great leader who would lead no more. 'I shall come back on Saturday week,' Parnell had said when leaving Dublin on Wednesday, September 30. He had kept his word. On Sunday morning, October 11, the 'Ireland' steamed into Kingstown bringing home the dead Chief. In the forenoon there was a Lying-in-state in the City Hall. In the afternoon, followed to his last resting-place by a vast concourse of people gathered from almost every part of the country, all that was mortal of Charles Stewart Parnell was laid in the grave, under the shadow of the tower which marks the spot where the greatest Irishman of the century—O'Connell—sleeps.

I shall not attempt to give an estimate of Parnell's character. I prefer to let the only Englishman who was worthy of his steel bear witness to his greatness.

CHAPTER XXVII

AN APPRECIATION

In December 1895 I wrote to Mr. Gladstone, saying that I was at work upon a life of Parnell, and that I would feel obliged if he would grant me the favour of an interview. He replied: 'I could not make any appointment except with the knowledge that my being able to keep it was a matter of certainty. I have a stronger reason. It is specially necessary for me to be cautious in touching anything associated with that name, that very remarkable, that happy and unhappy name. I shall be happy to give the best answer to any and every query you may think proper to send me by letter—and this, I feel sure, is the best answer I can make to your request.'

I immediately sent him the following queries:

'1. When did you begin to recognise the parliamentary capacity of Mr. Parnell?

'2. How did it manifest itself?

'3. To what do you ascribe Mr. Parnell's extraordinary ascendency? Was he, in your judgment, a man of great intellectual power, or did his strength lie in his will?

'4. May I ask if any written communications passed between you and him about Irish matters?

'5. May I ask whether you inquired or whether he caused to be made known to you his views of the Bill of 1886?

'6. Have you had many interviews with Mr. Parnell? and might I ask how many and under what circumstances, particularly anything you feel at liberty to say about the interview at Hawarden?

'7. May I ask whether you feel at liberty to express any opinion as to the legitimate effect on people's minds of the moral conduct attributed to Mr. Parnell at the time of the proceedings in the Divorce Court, and what amount of difference was due to the supposed popular feeling; and generally as to the sum of the impression made upon you by him, and as to the place you think he will hold, (1) in parliamentary history; (2) in British history; (3) in Irish history?'

Mr. Gladstone replied:

'Hawarden Castle, Chester: Dec. 11, 1895.

'My answers are as follows:

'1, 2. During the early years of Mr. Parnell's distinction I was absorbed in the Eastern Question, and in the main unaware of what was going on in Ireland. My real knowledge begins with the Parliament of 1880.

'3, 4. This is rather too much a question of opinion; but I will say to strength of will, self-reliance, and self-command, clear knowledge of his own mind, no waste in word or act, advantages of birth and education. His knowledge seemed small. I never saw a sign of his knowing Irish history. I have no recollection of any letters except when, after the assassination, he wrote to me offering to retire from Parliament. I replied, dissuading him from it.

'5. I learned Mr. Parnell's views on the Bill from his own mouth when he spoke first on it in Parliament.

'6. I had a short conversation with him in the hearing of others on the floor of the House in 1881. I remember no other before the Home Rule Bill.

'7. I had an opinion of my own upon this subject, but I thought it my duty not to state it, and I now think this silence was right and obligatory upon me. Until my last interview with him, which was at this place (I think late in 1890), I thought him one of the most satisfactory men to do business with I had ever known. But the *sum total* of any of my interviews on business with him must, I think, have been under two hours. He was wonderfully laconic and direct. I could hardly conceive his ever using an unnecessary word. His place is only in Irish history, outside of which for him there was no British or parliamentary history. On the list of Irish patriots I place him with or next to Daniel O'Connell. He was a man, I think, of more masculine and stronger character than Grattan.

'To clear up No. 5, I set the Home Rule question on foot exclusively in obedience to the call of Ireland, that call being in my judgment constitutional and conclusive.'

Learning early in 1897 that Mr. Gladstone was coming to London on his way to Cannes, I wrote again, asking him to give me a short interview. He replied saying that if I called upon him at 4 Whitehall Court at twelve o'clock on January 28 he would be glad to see me. I called at the appointed time. I had not seen him since 1890. He was much changed. He had aged greatly. His face had grown heavy and

massive, and his step had lost something of its old elasticity. Yet when I entered the room he rose from the table at which he was seated near the window, and crossed to meet me with an activity which was wonderful in a man of his years. 'I do not know,' he said, 'that I have much to tell you about Parnell, but I will answer fully every question you ask.' He then sat in an armchair close to the fire, and I drew near him. He was very deaf, and leaned eagerly forward to hear what I had to ask or say. He seemed to feel a keen interest in everything about Parnell, and as he recalled the events of the past eighteen years and talked about the Irish leader and the Irish movement one quickly forgot his years and became absorbed and delighted in his conversation. The face was lighted up by brilliant flashes of thought; the expression was varied, bright, beautiful; he spoke with energy and vehemence, and with an intonation which showed that his voice still retained something of its old charm.

I began the conversation by saying: 'May I ask when you first discovered that there was anything remarkable in Parnell?'

Mr. Gladstone. 'I must begin by saying that I did not discover anything remarkable in Mr. Parnell until much later than I ought to have discovered it. But you know that I had retired from the leadership of the Liberal party about the time that Parnell entered Parliament, and when I came back to public life my attention was absorbed by the Eastern Question, by Bulgaria, and I did not think much about Ireland. I do not think that Mr. Parnell or Irish matters much engaged my attention until we came back to Government in 1880. You see we thought that the Irish question was settled. There was the Church Act and

the Land Act, and there was a time of peace and prosperity, and I frankly confess that we did not give as much attention to Ireland as we ought to have done. Then, you know, there was distress and trouble, and the Irish question again came to the front.'

'Could you say what it was that first attracted your attention to Parnell?'

Mr. Gladstone (with much energy). 'Parnell was the most remarkable man I ever met. I do not say the ablest man; I say the most remarkable and the most interesting. He was an intellectual phenomenon. He was unlike anyone I had ever met. He did things and he said things unlike other men. His ascendency over his party was extraordinary. There has never been anything like it in my experience in the House of Commons. He succeeded in surrounding himself with very clever men, with men exactly suited for his purpose. They have changed since, I don't know why. Everything seems to have changed. But in his time he had a most efficient party, an extraordinary party. I do not say extraordinary as an Opposition, but extraordinary as a Government. The absolute obedience, the strict discipline, the military discipline, in which he held them was unlike anything I have ever seen. They were always there, they were always ready, they were always united, they never shirked the combat, and Parnell was supreme all the time.' Then, with renewed energy: 'Oh, Parnell was a most remarkable man and most interesting. I don't think he treated me well at the end, but my interest in him has never abated, and I feel an intense interest in his memory now.' Then, striking the arm of his chair with his hand: 'Poor fellow! poor fellow! it was a terrible tragedy. I do believe firmly that if these divorce

proceedings had not taken place there would be a Parliament in Ireland to-day.'

I said: 'He suffered terribly during the last year of his life. The iron had entered his soul. I was with him constantly, and saw the agony of his mind, though he tried to keep it a secret from us all.'

Mr. Gladstone. 'Poor fellow! Ah! if he were alive now I would do anything for him.'

'May I ask, When did you first speak to Parnell?'

Mr. Gladstone. 'Well, under very peculiar circumstances, and they illustrate what I mean when I speak of him as being unlike anyone I ever met. I was in the House of Commons, and it was in 1881, when, you know, we were at war. Parnell had made violent speeches in Ireland. He had stirred the people up to lawlessness. Forster had those speeches printed. He put them into my hands. I read them carefully. They made a deep impression on me, and I came down to the house and attacked Parnell. I think I made rather a strong speech (with a smile)—drew up rather a strong indictment against him, for some of the extracts were very bad. Well, he sat still all the time, was quite immovable. He never interrupted me; he never even made a gesture of dissent. I remember there was one declaration of his which was outrageous in its lawlessness. I read it slowly and deliberately, and watched him the while. He never winced, while the House was much moved. He listened attentively, courteously, but showed no feeling, no excitement, no concern. I sat down. He did not rise to reply. He looked as if he were the one individual in the House who was not a bit affected by what I said. The debate went on. After a time I walked out of the House. He rose from his seat, followed me, and coming up with much dignity

and in a very friendly way, said: "Mr. Gladstone, I should like to see those extracts from my speeches which you read. I should like particularly to see that last declaration. Would you allow me to see your copy?" I said, "Certainly," and I returned to the table, got the copy, and brought it back to him. He glanced through it quickly. Fastening at once on the most violent declaration, he said, very quietly: "That's wrong; I never used those words. The report is quite wrong. I am much obliged to you for letting me see it." And, sir (with vehemence), he was right. The report was wrong. The Irish Government had blundered. But Parnell went away quite unconcerned. He did not ask me to look into the matter. He was apparently wholly indifferent. Of course I did look into the matter, and made it right. But Parnell, to all appearances, did not care. That was my first interview with him, and it made a deep impression on me. The immobility of the man, the laconic way of dealing with the subject, his utter indifference to the opinion of the House—the whole thing was so extraordinary and so unlike what one was accustomed to in such circumstances.'

'You disapproved of Mr. Parnell's action after the passing of the Land Act in 1881?'

Mr. Gladstone. 'Yes; I think he acted very badly then, and unlike what one would expect from him. He proposed to get up what he called test cases, to give the Act a fair trial, as he said. But the test cases were got up really to prevent the Act getting any trial at all. Well, I then took an extreme course. I put him into gaol. It was then I said (with a smile) that the resources of civilisation were not exhausted. I felt that if I did not stop him he would have stopped the Act.

'May I ask if you were in favour of the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act in 1881?'

Mr. Gladstone. 'Ah, well, I don't think I can go into that.'

I said: 'I have seen Lord Cowper, and he told me that you were.'

Mr. Gladstone. 'Ah! if Lord Cowper told you that, then I may talk about it. Yes, I was. Forster was quite mistaken at that time. He told me that the lawlessness was caused (scornfully) by village ruffians, and that if the Habeas Corpus Act were suspended he could lay his hands on them all, put them into gaol, and end the whole business. Why, it was absurd. The whole country was up, and well organised. It was not a case for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act at all, and I said so at the time. But Forster pressed the matter. Forster really acted badly in that business. He did not understand the nature of the Habeas Corpus Act. I will give you an example of what I mean. There was a doctor in Dublin. He was Medical Adviser to the Local Government Board. He afterwards became a member of Parliament. I think his name was Kenny. Forster put him in gaol under the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act, and he then dismissed him from his office under the Local Government Board. He never told me a word about it. Of course it was monstrous. He could put a man into gaol on suspicion, but he could not dismiss him from his post on suspicion. The first thing I heard of the matter was when an Irish member asked a question about it in the House of Commons. I was sitting next to Forster at the time. I turned round and said to him: "Why, you can't do this. It is quite unwarrantable." He said: "Well, I suppose you will get up and say so." I said; "Indeed

I will," and I did. Now that is an instance of how little Forster knew about the Habeas Corpus Act. In fact, Forster (with a laugh), like a good many Radicals, had no adequate conception of public liberty.'

'May I ask under what circumstances was Parnell released from Kilmainham?'

Mr. Gladstone. 'Yes, that is another point. What is this they call it? The Kilmainham treaty. How ridiculous! There was no treaty. There could not be a treaty. Just think what the Habeas Corpus Act means. You put a man into gaol on suspicion. You are bound to let him out when the circumstances justifying your suspicion have changed. And that was the case with Parnell.'

'When was your next communication with Mr. Parnell?'

Mr. Gladstone. 'In 1882, after the Phœnix Park murders. Parnell was, you know, greatly affected by those murders. They were a great blow to him. Those murders were committed on a Saturday. On Sunday, while I was at lunch, a letter was brought to me from Parnell. I was much touched by it. He wrote evidently under strong emotions. He did not ask me whether I would advise him to retire from public life or not. That was not how he put it. He asked me rather what effect I thought the murder would have on English public opinion in relation to his leadership of the Irish party. Well, I wrote expressing my own opinion, and what I thought would be the opinions of others, that his retirement from public life would do no good; on the contrary, would do harm. I thought his conduct in the whole matter very praiseworthy. I had a communication from Mrs. O'Shea about the same time. She wrote to ask me to call to see her. Well, she told me that she was a niece

of Lord Hatherley, and I called to see her. She said that a great change had come over Parnell with reference to myself personally and with reference to the Liberal party, and that he desired friendly relations with us. I said that I had no objection to friendly relations with him, and wished to meet him in a fair spirit.'

'Had you any written communications with Mrs. O'Shea?'

Mr. Gladstone. 'No, I wrote her no letters of importance. I wrote her letters acknowledging hers, as I have told you in the case of the first appointment. But all my communications with her were oral, and all my communications with Parnell were oral. I received only one letter from him, the letter after the Phœnix Park murders.'

'Was Parnell a pleasant, satisfactory man to do business with?'

Mr. Gladstone. 'Most pleasant, most satisfactory. On the surface it was impossible to transact business with a more satisfactory man. He took such a thorough grasp of the subject in hand, was so quick, and treated the matter with so much clearness and brevity. It's a curious thing that the two most laconic men I ever met were Irishmen, Parnell and Archdeacon Stopford. When the Irish Church Bill was under consideration, Archdeacon Stopford wrote to me saying that he objected strongly to the Bill, but that he saw it was bound to pass, and that he thought the best thing for him to do was to communicate with me, and see if he could get favourable amendments introduced. He came to see me, and we went through the Bill together. Well, he was just like Parnell—took everything in at a glance, made up his mind quickly, and stated his own

views with the greatest simplicity and clearness. It was an intellectual treat to do business with Parnell. He only deceived me once. That was at our meeting at Hawarden in 1889. When the Home Rule Bill was introduced in 1886 he told me that he was indifferent on the question of the retention or the exclusion of the Irish members, that he was ready to give way to English opinion on the point, and that he would not endanger the Bill for it. Well, when he came to Hawarden in 1889 we talked over the new Home Rule Bill, and I then told him that I thought we would be obliged to retain the Irish members. He said nothing, remained perfectly silent, and so I gathered that he was of the same mind as in 1886 and left me quite a free hand on that point. But I learned subsequently that he had promised Mr. Rhodes to secure the retention of the Irish members.[1] Well, I do not want to lay too much stress upon it. As a rule, he was frank in his declarations and could be relied upon. I will give you an instance of what I mean. I was very anxious about the Royal Allowances Bill. I was not only anxious that the grant should be made, but that it should be unanimously and even generously made. The Irish members could not defeat the grant, but they could have obstructed and made difficulties, and deprived the measure of the grace which I wished it to have. I met Parnell in one of the division lobbies, and said to him: "The Prince of Wales is no enemy of Ireland; he is no enemy to any Irish policy which has the sanction of the masses of the Irish people." Parnell answered as usual in a few words. He said:

[1] On June 23, 1888, Parnell wrote a letter to Mr. Rhodes, which was published on July 7, 1888, stating that if Mr. Gladstone wished to retain the Irish members he would agree.

"I am glad to hear it. I do not think you need fear anything from us." Well, I got Parnell and Sexton put on a committee which was appointed to consider the subject. Nothing could be better than Parnell's conduct on that occasion. He showed the greatest skill, tact, and ability, and gave me the most efficient help at every turn. I always felt that I could rely on his word.'

'Were there any of Parnell's followers whom you would place with him?'

Mr. Gladstone. 'There was no one in the House of Commons whom I would place with him. As I have said, he was an intellectual phenomenon.'

'Who do you think was the cleverest member of his party?'

Mr. Gladstone. 'Well, Healy was very clever; he made very clever speeches. I do not know what has become of him now, but under Parnell he was admirable. Of course, I have the profoundest respect for Justin McCarthy and Mr. Dillon. Dillon was useful, but Healy was very clever. I have heard Healy reply to a Minister on the spur of a moment—not a note, not a sign of preparation that I could see, all done with the greatest readiness and the greatest effect. The Land Bill of 1881 was a most complicated measure; only four members of the House understood it. Gibson understood it; Law, the Irish Attorney-General, understood it; Herschell, who was English Solicitor-General, threw himself into the subject with great zest and acquired a sound knowledge of it. But no one gained so complete a mastery of its details as Healy. He had them at his fingers' ends.'

'May I ask, when did you first turn your attention to Home Rule?'

Mr. Gladstone. 'Well, you will see by a speech which I made on the Address in 1882 that I then had the subject in my mind. I said then that a system of Local Government for Ireland should differ in some important respects from any system of Local Government introduced in England or Scotland. Plunket got up immediately and said that I meant Home Rule. But I am bound to say that Gibson followed, and said that he did not put that construction upon my words. Well, I had to send an account of that speech to the Queen, and it led to a correspondence between us. More than this I cannot say on the subject. But I may add that I never made but one speech against Home Rule. That was at Aberdeen, soon after the movement was set on foot. I could not, of course, support Butt's movement, because it was not a national movement. I had no evidence that Ireland was behind it. Parnell's movement was very different. It came to this: we granted a fuller franchise to Ireland in 1884, and Ireland then sent eighty-five members to the Imperial Parliament. That settled the question. When the people express their determination in that decisive way, you must give them what they ask. It would be the same in Scotland. I don't say that Home Rule is necessary for Scotland. But if ever the Scotch ask for it, as the Irish have asked for it, they must get it. I am bound to say that I did not know as much about the way the Union was carried when I took up Home Rule as I came to know afterwards. If I had known as much I would have been more earnest and extreme. The union with Ireland has no moral force. It has the force of law, no doubt, but it rests on no moral basis. That is the line which I should always take, were I an Irishman. That is the line which as

an Englishman I take now. Ah! had Parnell lived, had there been no divorce proceedings, I do solemnly believe there would be a Parliament in Ireland now. Oh! it was a terrible tragedy.'

'May I ask if you considered that Parnell should have retired from public life altogether, or only from the leadership of the Irish party?'

Mr. Gladstone. 'From public life altogether. There ought to have been a death, but there would have been a resurrection. I do not say that the private question ought to have affected the public movement. What I say is, it did affect it, and, having affected it, Parnell was bound to go. What was my position? After the verdict in the divorce case I received letters from my colleagues, I received letters from Liberals in the House of Commons and in the country, and all told the same tale: Parnell must go. All said it would be impossible for the movement to go on with him. Well, there was a meeting of the Federation at Sheffield; Morley and Harcourt were there. After the meeting they came to me and said: "Parnell must go. The movement cannot go on with him." I do not think that Harcourt had any convictions on the subject. I do not think that Morley had. Therefore they were unprejudiced witnesses, and their testimony, coming after the testimony of the others and in corroboration of it, was irresistible. I then took action. I wrote a private letter to Mr. Justin McCarthy, which I wished him to show to Parnell before the meeting of the party. I stated what I conceived to be the public opinion of England. I did exactly what Parnell had asked me to do in the case of the Phœnix Park murders. Well, that letter never reached Parnell. Why McCarthy did not give it to him I cannot say. Having failed to get at

Parnell in that way, I tried to get at him in another. I asked Morley to find him out; Morley tried, but he could not be found, he kept out of our way. Well, what was I to do under these circumstances, with English public opinion rising all the time? No resource was left to me but the public letter which I wrote to Morley. Then there was an end of everything. I think Parnell acted badly. I think he ought to have gone right away. He would have come back, nothing could have prevented him; he would have been as supreme as ever, for he was a most extraordinary man. Was he callous to everything? I never could tell how much he felt, or how much he did not feel. He was generally immovable. Indeed, immobility was his great characteristic. On some occasions, very rarely indeed, he would seem to be excited. In the House of Commons I would say to my colleagues: "Don't be mistaken; he is not excited, he is quite calm and completely master of himself."'

I said: 'He was capable of great feeling, and he suffered intense pain during the last year of his life, though he tried to conceal it.'

Mr. Gladstone. 'Poor fellow! poor fellow! I suppose he did; dear, dear, what a tragedy! I cannot tell you how much I think about him, and what an interest I take in everything concerning him. A marvellous man, a terrible fall.'

With these words I close the story of Parnell's life. He brought Ireland within sight of the Promised Land. The triumph of the national cause awaits other times, and another Man.

APPENDIX

REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMISSION

Conclusions

We have now pursued our inquiry over a sufficiently extended period to enable us to report upon the several charges and allegations which have been made against the respondents, and we have indicated in the course of this statement our findings upon these charges and allegations, but it will be convenient to repeat seriatim the conclusions we have arrived at upon the issues which have been raised for our consideration.

I. We find that the respondent Members of Parliament collectively were not members of a conspiracy having for its object to establish the absolute independence of Ireland, but we find that some of them, together with Mr. Davitt, established and joined in the Land League organisation with the intention by its means to bring about the absolute independence of Ireland as a separate nation.

II. We find that the respondents did enter into a conspiracy by a system of coercion and intimidation to promote an agrarian agitation against the payment of agricultural rents, for the purpose of impoverishing and expelling from the country the Irish landlords, who were styled the 'English Garrison.'

III. We find that the charge that 'when on certain occasions they thought it politic to denounce, and did denounce, certain crimes in public, they afterwards led their supporters to believe such denunciation was not sincere' is not established. We entirely acquit Mr. Parnell and the other respondents of the charge of insincerity in their denunciation of the Phœnix Park murders, and find that the facsimile letter on which this charge was chiefly based as against Mr. Parnell is a forgery.

IV. We find that the respondents did disseminate the 'Irish World' and other newspapers tending to incite to sedition and the commission of other crime.

V. We find that the respondents did not directly incite persons to the commission of crime other than intimidation, but that they did incite to intimidation, and that the consequence of that incitement was that crime and outrage were committed by the persons incited. We find that it has not been proved that the respondents made payments for the purpose of inciting persons to commit crime.

VI. We find as to the allegation that the respondents did nothing to prevent crime and expressed no *bonâ fide* disapproval, that some of the respondents, and in particular Mr. Davitt, did express *bonâ fide* disapproval of crime and outrage, but that the respondents did not denounce the system of intimidation which led to crime and outrage, but persisted in it with knowledge of its effect.

VII. We find that the respondents did defend persons charged with agrarian crime, and supported their families, but that it has not been proved that they subscribed to testimonials for, or were intimately associated with, notorious criminals, or that they made payments to procure the escape of criminals from justice.

VIII. We find, as to the allegation that the respondents made payments to compensate persons who had been injured in the commission of crime, that they did make such payments.

IX. As to the allegation that the respondents invited the

assistance and co-operation of and accepted subscriptions of money from known advocates of crime and the use of dynamite, we find that the respondents did invite the assistance and co-operation of and accepted subscriptions of money from Patrick Ford, a known advocate of crime and the use of dynamite, but that it has not been proved that the respondents or any of them knew that the Clan-na-Gael controlled the League or was collecting money for the Parliamentary Fund. It has been proved that the respondents invited and obtained the assistance and co-operation of the Physical Force party in America, including the Clan-na-Gael, and in order to obtain that assistance abstained from repudiating or condemning the action of that party.[1]

. . . . . .

The two special charges against Mr. Davitt, viz: (*a*) 'That he was a member of the Fenian organisation, and convicted as such, and that he assisted in the formation of the Land League with money which had been contributed for the purpose of outrage and crime;' (*b*) 'That he was in close and intimate association with the party of violence in America, and was mainly instrumental in bringing about the alliance between that party and the Parnellite and Home Rule party in America;' are based on passages in the 'Times' leading articles of the 7th and 14th March, 1887. 'The new movement was appropriately started by Fenians out of Fenian funds; its "father" is Michael Davitt, a convicted Fenian.' 'That Mr. Parnell's "constitutional organisation" was planned by Fenian brains, founded on a Fenian loan, and reared by Fenian hands.'

We have shown in the course of the report that Mr. Davitt was a member of the Fenian organisation, and convicted as such, and that he received money from a fund which had been contributed for the purpose of outrage and crime, viz. the Skirmishing Fund. It was not, however, for the formation of the Land League itself, but for the promo-

[1] The part omitted has been quoted in the text.

tion of the agitation which led up to it. We have also shown that Mr. Davitt returned the money out of his own resources.

With regard to the further allegation that he was in close and intimate association with the party of violence in America, and mainly instrumental in bringing about the alliance between that party and the Parnellite and Home Rule Party in America, we find that he was in such close and intimate association for the purpose of bringing about, and that he was mainly instrumental in bringing about, the alliance referred to.

ALL WHICH WE HUMBLY REPORT TO YOUR MAJESTY.

JAMES HANNEN.
JOHN C. DAY.
ARCHIBALD L. SMITH.

HENRY HARDINGE CUNYNGHAME,
Secretary.

ROYAL COURTS OF JUSTICE,
13*th February*, 1890.

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